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ABSTRACT

This report describes the implementation and results of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development, a 4-year grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The project was initiated in January 1996, in 50 schools from 4 school districts in Salt Lake City (Utah) and neighboring communities. The grant included more than 65 schools in 6 school districts, while some grant-sponsored activities included educators from across the state. The evaluation design was a collaborative model where grant participants planned and conducted the evaluations. Each evaluation activity had three primary objectives: (1) to provide valid information to document the implementation of the project; (2) to evaluate the accomplishment of project goals; and (3) to provide comprehensive staff development plans for educators in evaluation and action research. Numerous instruments were developed to collect formative and summative information. The grant provided a framework for implementing character education, but the specifics were left to the discretion of the participating schools. Many Utah schools had already implemented character education activities. Schools were asked how the grant had contributed to their efforts. Their responses indicate that two elements, adequate funding and the teacher involvement framework, were vital to the success of the initiatives. The Utah Community Partnership legitimized the teaching of values and contributed to a community-wide awareness of character education. (Contains 6 tables, 13 references, and a statistical appendix.) (BT)

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Utah Community Partnership for Character Education. Final Evaluation Report.

Jennifer S. Johns

Utah State Office of Education,
Salt Lake City

SO 033 686

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Utah Community Partnership for CHARACTER Education

Final Evaluation Report

Jennifer S. Johns
Project Evaluator

2001

Utah Community Partnership for Character Development
Final Evaluation Report
1995-1999

Project Partners:

U.S. Department of Education
Utah State Office of Education
Alpine School District
Granite School District
North Summit School District
Salt Lake City School District
Wasatch School District
Washington School District

Dr. Steven O. Laing
State Superintendent for Public Instruction

Kristin D. Fink
State Character Education Specialist
and Project Director

Jennifer S. Johns
Project Evaluator

Funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Education: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects, U.S. Department of Education.

THANK YOU

I would like to extend my thanks to all of the wonderful Utah educators, parents, and community members who participated in this project. A special thanks to the Utah State Board of Education, the State Legislature, and Governor, Michael O. Leavitt for advocating that character education be included in the basic school program. I also appreciate the efforts of the Character Education Partnership and everyone who has worked so hard to place character once again on the national agenda. It took the entire community to reintegrate character education into the schools.

Sincerely,
Kristin Fink
Character Education Specialist

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

I want to express my appreciation and thanks to the many fine educators in Utah with whom I have had the pleasure of working the last five years. I know it wasn't easy finding the time to accomplish the many evaluation activities that were part of this grant. However, without your energy, perseverance, and commitment this report would not have been possible.

I am honored to have been associated with such an exemplary project—one that was administered with visionary leadership and meticulously implemented by some of the most caring teachers and administrators I have ever met.

Thank you for your friendship and your loving dedication to children.

Sincerely,
Jennifer S. Johns
Project Evaluator

Selected Comments from Grant Participants

"I try to stress to every class and every kid I associate with that all humans deserve kindness and respect. It is an underlying rule in my room."

"I try to remember a saying I heard long ago—'Children don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' That means 'caring' precedes 'learning.' I am absolutely sold on character education in the classroom."

"With the implementation of the federal grant, the once hesitant, but supportive staff, has now taken a huge leap in the ownership of their significant role in helping shape a child's life and character. The character education movement has built strong, active links in the triangle of influence in a child's life—family, school, and community."

"The effect of the character education strategies that our school has incorporated is evidenced in the way that students attempt to solve interpersonal problems with peers. They are learning to define problems, get the facts, and treat one another with tolerance and respect as they work through the steps of problem solving. Teachers are taking the time to use conflicts as teaching moments, not just as a reason to impose punishment. I hear teachers and students referring to skills taught in assemblies and classroom presentations by the counselor as they work on their own problems. The school climate is less combative and more open to individual perspectives."

"It is the belief of our school that finding acceptance, building self-esteem and teaching strong character values as well as providing mentors for all children is possibly even more important than installing metal detectors, locking the doors to keep people out, and having armed police patrolling the halls. We will continue to believe that character development is as important as increasing test scores in language arts, math, and science. We will continue to combine academic instruction with character values. Our efforts will continue to make every child special, wanted, and accepted. We appreciate the concept of "character education" and the leadership provided by our district, state, and federal government and believe it is our place to implement programs making them interact with each and every child, each and every day. Thank you for your support."

"Without the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development, our school would be a very different place. I feel that this grant has provided our school with a means to reach a common positive goal that has touched the lives of our children, our faculty and staff, and our parents. Thank you for the means for us to make a most dramatic change in our environment."

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1995-99

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Description

This report includes a description of the implementation and results of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development, a four-year grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The project was initiated in January of 1996, in 50 schools from four school districts in Salt Lake City and neighboring communities. Eventually the grant included more than 65 schools in six school districts, while some grant-sponsored activities such as conferences included educators from across the state. Educators from the six school districts participated in a similar process each year. After the initial philosophy workshop, which was a one-time event, schools participated in a community workshop, a two-day school/community planning session, curriculum development activities, an annual conference, and evaluation sessions.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation design was a collaborative model that involved grant participants in planning and conducting the evaluation. Each evaluation activity was designed with three primary objectives—1) to provide valid information to document the implementation of the project, 2) to evaluate the successful accomplishment of project goals, and 3) to provide comprehensive staff development for educators in evaluation and action research. The evaluator developed numerous instruments to collect both formative and summative information.

Implementing Character Education in the School

The grant provided a framework for implementing character education, but the specifics (such as the values to be emphasized, the approaches to be taken, and the materials to be used) were left to the discretion of individual schools. This resulted in highly individualized approaches that were more likely to be enduring for several reasons than a "cookbook" approach to character education. First, teachers and administrators were invested in the success of the initiatives because they were intimately involved in their development and implementation. Second, the initiatives reflected the needs and goals of individual communities and, therefore, were more likely to be sustained than "add-on" programs that might disappear as interest waned and new topics competed for attention. Third, the grant encouraged the incorporation of values across the curriculum and throughout the entire school, resulting in permanent changes in curriculum, policies, and procedures.

In spite of the individual nature of initiatives, most schools went through a similar process in implementing character education. The elements common to all of the initiatives included planning, professional development, parent and community involvement, purchase or development of

curriculum materials and resources, a variety of instructional activities and approaches, and evaluation. Support provided by the grant for planning and professional development proved to be critical to the success of the initiatives. Schools were encouraged to take adequate time to discuss character education, to involve parents and teachers in the identification of values, and to collaboratively develop action plans. This resulted in consensus and enthusiastic support for character education, as well as thoughtful approaches to character development. Professional development also was emphasized because teachers and administrators were perceived as the key to creating lasting changes in how children were educated using character development as the framework. Participants were involved in grant-sponsored inservice and encouraged to seek additional opportunities for professional growth. Even the evaluation was designed to be a professional development opportunity for educators as they learned about action research and evaluation, how to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data, and how to use evaluation information to inform practice.

In addition to planning and professional development, the grant framework encouraged parent and community involvement. Schools used a variety of creative approaches to involve families and community members in planning, developing, and implementing their character education initiatives.

Approaches to Character Development

The majority of schools used grant funds to purchase, adapt, or produce materials for use by teachers, students, and families in character development activities. The materials were very eclectic and were used to support the schools' goals, rather than defining the goals for them. Although initially only a core group of teachers was involved in character development efforts, most schools attempted to involve all teachers as quickly as possible. Many schools began by using values as monthly themes for classroom and school-wide activities, with teachers responsible for generating lessons and assemblies. Some schools, especially those that had devoted several years to character education prior to the grant, soon began to focus on integrating values across the curriculum, an approach that was given substantial support through intensive curriculum integration workshops that occurred during the summers. In addition to integrating values throughout the curriculum, some schools indicated they integrated values into all of the school's extracurricular activities and clubs for students, as well as into their discipline policies. Individual school districts further supported the integration of values through district-wide adoption of comprehensive frameworks that integrated values throughout the school, such as Community of Caring.

Service to others was a central aspect of the schools' focus on character development and provided valuable opportunities for school communities to put values into action. Almost every school reported involvement in at least one, and sometimes many, service projects. These included service within the schools, such as peer tutoring and school beautification or cleanup projects, and service to the community such as recycling, food drives, and raising money for charitable organizations. At least two schools won national awards for their service-learning projects.

Many schools attempted to foster a positive school climate through student and staff recognition programs, by creating mixed age "friendship groups" within the school, and by focusing on the development of conflict resolution and mediation skills.

How the Grant Facilitated Character Development

Since many schools in Utah had already implemented character education activities, some for many years, schools were asked how the grant had contributed to their efforts. It was apparent from comments by participants that two elements—adequate funding and the teacher involvement framework—were vital to the success of the initiatives. The grant funding made it possible to devote the time required to plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive character development model. In an era of shrinking budgets for education, it afforded schools the luxury of being able to purchase sufficient materials and resources to thoroughly implement the initiatives. Especially in schools that were just getting started, this made a significant difference. Even in those schools that had already devoted substantial time to character development, the grant provided a more organized focus and enabled them to expand their efforts. But perhaps most importantly, the grant contributed to the professional development of teachers and administrators, which will benefit children and society for years to come.

Impact of the Grant

The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development legitimized the teaching of values and contributed to a community-wide awareness of character education. Enthusiastic support by teachers, families, and the community was generated for one of the original missions of public education—the development of good character. As teachers' awareness of the importance and legitimacy of teaching values in the school increased, the number of teachers who were actively involved in character education activities significantly increased at both the elementary and secondary levels.

In addition to creating a climate that was supportive of a school-wide focus on character development, the grant greatly contributed to the professional development of educators through their reading of professional literature, development of character-related curriculum, engaging in dialogue with colleagues about teaching and learning, participating on school committees, and presenting inservice to colleagues. It also contributed to the incorporation of teaching strategies that were effective in promoting character development, such as integrating values throughout their curriculum and providing opportunities for school and community service. Many teachers indicated that they now consciously focus on character education and values in the curriculum, as well as use a variety of character building strategies such as cooperative learning, class meetings, opportunities for student leadership and self-government, positive discipline plans, and "teachable moments" to spontaneously discuss values. Perhaps most importantly, teachers were aware of the significant role they played in shaping students' character by fostering positive relationships in the classroom and by consciously being a good role model in all of their interactions with students.

Students also showed evidence of an increasing awareness of values through their ability to define and give examples of their school's values on the Student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts, and through their high levels of awareness of school expectations for positive behavior as measured by the Character Development Survey. Fifteen schools provided statistical evidence of decreases ranging from 15% to 100% in negative student behaviors such as discipline referrals, suspensions, and fighting, while many more schools provided anecdotal evidence of fewer student fights and confrontations, decreased vandalism, decreased tardies and an increase in positive behaviors such as interacting more kindly and respectfully with students and teachers, better attendance, and improved achievement. While researchers believe that several years must elapse

before the impact of character education programs on students' long-term character development can be sufficiently judged, the evaluation suggests that character education efforts in Utah are having a positive effect on student behavior in school.

Positive changes in school climate were noted as well, including improved collegiality and communication among staff members, more positive relationships between students and staff, better relationships with parents, and increased parental involvement. Statistically significant improvements were noted by elementary staff in the overall school climate, kindness and caring, respect and responsibility, and fairness and honesty as measured by the Character Development Survey. However, parent and student perceptions did not significantly improve, nor did the perceptions of secondary staff, students, or parents.

Epilogue

The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development expanded Utah's historical commitment to character education by supporting the development of a highly successful model for implementing community-based character education. The grant also facilitated the development of collaborative relationships among the USOE, local school districts, universities, and state and national organizations and provided the impetus to further integrate character education into state education documents and institutions. Character education is embedded in the state core curriculum and Life Skills, included in the State Strategic Plan for Education, reflected in the State Board of Education's Mission Statement and Character Education Position Statement, and part of preservice teacher preparation program standards. There are also two character education state laws. The initial hesitancy of schools and communities towards addressing character development in the schools has given way to a dedicated commitment to the academic and moral development of our future citizens.

Utah Community Partnership for Character Development
Final Evaluation Report
1996-99

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Utah's Historical Commitment to Character Education

Utah has been actively supporting the development of good character in children for many years through strong faith communities, state law, and the incorporation of character education into many state education documents and institutions. A law was passed in 1953 that indicated schools should be teaching character traits. For nearly a decade, character education has been embedded in the core curriculum and supported by the Utah State Board of Education plan. More recently, the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst developed a state strategic plan for education that includes character education. The plan says, *"Character/Citizenship Development will be the underlying thread taught by all educators to all ages and in all areas."* In addition, the Utah State Legislature has provided funding for character education in school districts. Just prior to receipt in 1995 of federal funds to implement the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development, the Governor's Office established a Commission for Centennial Values and prepared two booklets about character education, one that was received by the family of every school-aged child in Utah and the other that was received by all teachers and principals in Utah. In addition he made character development a goal for his administration. Individual school districts have taken a leadership role and professors from several of the state's universities have made nationally recognized contributions to the field of character education. The State Board of Education recently added character development and ethics as part of the state's Life Skills. They also recently included character and ethical development in the preservice teaching standards for university teacher preparation programs. The Utah State Legislature funded a part-time Character Education Specialist position in the past and in 1995 made this a full-time position, as well as providing funding to school districts for character education activities. The project director for the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development (who is also the Character Education Specialist for the State) has been very successful in promoting awareness of Utah's long standing commitment to character development as a primary mission of public education in Utah.

Grant Participants

During the first year of the grant, the 1995-96 school year, 50 schools in four school districts (Alpine, Salt Lake, Granite, and Wasatch) participated in the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development. During the second year of the grant, the 1996-97 school year, the project was expanded to include an additional 18 schools from three of the participating districts. The majority of these schools comprised two high school clusters—one in Salt Lake and one in Granite School Districts. One alternative school in Wasatch also participated. During the third year of the grant, the 1997-98 school year, an additional high school cluster from Alpine, two alternative schools from Salt Lake and Granite, and 10 schools representing two new districts—North Summit and Washington, were added to the project. During the final year of the grant, all of these schools continued to participate. In addition, schools from several new districts were included in the community training and other grant activities, but were not required to be a part of the evaluation. They were, however, provided with project evaluation materials to use on their own. See Table 1.

TABLE 1.
Utah Schools Participating in Grant, 1995-99

DISTRICT	SCHOOL	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
ALPINE	Central Elementary	X	X		
(Pleasant Grove)	Grovecrest Elementary	X	X		
	Lindon Elementary	X	X		
	Manila Elementary	X	X		
	Valley View Elementary	X	X		
	Oak Canyon Jr. High	X	X		
	Pleasant Grove Jr. High	X	X		
	Pleasant Grove High	X	X		
(Orem)	Cascade Elementary			X	X
	Hillcrest Elementary			X	X
	Orchard Elementary			X	X
	Scera Park Elementary			X	X
	Sharon Elementary			X	X
	Canyon View Jr. High			X	X
	Orem High			X	
SALT LAKE	Lowell Elementary	X	X		
(West)	Meadowlark Elementary	X	X		
	Newman Elementary	X	X		
	Wasatch Elementary	X	X		
	Washington Elementary	X	X		
	Bryant Middle	X	X		
	Northwest Middle	X	X		
	West High	X	X		
SALT LAKE	Beacon Heights Elementary		X	X	
(Highland)	Dilworth Elementary		X	X	
	Highland Park Elementary		X	X	
	Indian Hills Elementary		X	X	
	Nibley Park Elementary		X	X	
	Rosslyn Heights Elementary		X	X	
	Hillside Intermediate		X	X	
	Highland High		X	X	
	Horizonte (Alternative)			X	X
GRANITE	Academy Park Elementary	X	X		
(Hunter)	Carl Sandberg Elementary	X	X		
	Hillside Elementary	X	X		
	Hunter Elementary	X	X		
	Jackling Elementary	X	X		
	Valley Crest Elementary	X	X		
	Whittier Elementary	X	X		
	Hunter Jr. High	X	X		
	Kennedy Jr. High	X	X		
GRANITE	Hunter High	X	X		
(Magna)	Copper Hills Elementary		X	X	
	Lake Ridge Elementary		X	X	
	Magna Elementary		X	X	
	Orchard Elementary		X	X	
	Pleasant Green Elementary		X	X	
	Brockbank Jr. High		X	X	
	Cyprus High		X	X	
	Hartvigsen (Alternative)			X	X

DISTRICT	SCHOOL	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
WASATCH	Central Elementary	X	X		
	Midway Elementary	X	X		
	North Kindergarten	X	X		
	JR Smith Elementary	X	X		
	Wasatch Middle	X	X		
	Wasatch High	X	X		
	Wasatch Alternative		X		
NO. SUMMIT	No Summit Elementary			X	X
	No Summit Middle			X	X
	No Summit High			X	X
WASHINGTON	Bloomington Elementary			X	X
	Diamond Valley Elementary			X	X
	East Elementary			X	X
	West Elementary			X	X
	Woodward Elementary			X	X
	Dixie Middle			X	X
	Dixie High			X	X

Grant Activities

A specific process was developed to implement the grant. After the initial philosophy workshop, which was a one-time activity, schools participated in the same sequence of activities during the grant—a community workshop, a two-day planning session involving schools and community members, curriculum development activities, an annual conference, and evaluation sessions. The evaluation sessions frequently were held concurrently with other sessions, e.g. the community workshop or the annual conference. A character education facilitator's strand was included during the third and fourth years of the grant. Each of these activities is summarized below.

Philosophy Workshop. This workshop, held for two days in late January of the 1995-96 school year, involved representatives from various character building coalitions, ethnic backgrounds, religious groups, occupations, and geographical areas of Utah in a discussion of values and the role of education in fostering character development in children. The workshop resulted in a written charter that formed the basis for the goals of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development.

Community Workshop. The community workshop was a 2-3 day session that introduced schools to character development. Michael Josephson, founder of Character Counts! keynoted the first year's workshop. Although the content was not identical each year, the workshop focused on introducing schools to the project and how it extended Utah's existing focus on character development. Participants learned how to identify a common core of values, successful strategies for gaining community consensus, and how to lay the groundwork for successful implementation of character development activities in schools and communities. Participants also were exposed to a wealth of materials, resources, ideas, and activities for incorporating character development into the ongoing work of the schools. Most workshop activities were interactive and hands-on, engaging educators in thinking about, planning, and developing character education, culminating with an action plan. Following this workshop, participants were expected to hold a two-day planning session in their school communities that resulted in an action plan to guide their character development activities. Typically schools met as a cluster to plan character education activities and many schools involved representatives from community groups.

Curriculum Development Activities. In the first three years of the grant, a week of curriculum development activities occurred each summer. During the summer of 1996, the project director, district coordinators, and educators from participating schools developed a rubric for integrating character development across the curriculum. During the summers of 1997 and 1998, John Samara of the Curriculum Integration Project, conducted a weeklong session on integrating values throughout the curriculum for school teams of teachers, counselors, and administrators.

Annual Conferences. An annual conference was held near the beginning of each school year to present ideas and strategies for implementing character education in the schools to grant participants, as well as to educators from across the state of Utah. The first annual conference, held in October of 1996 at Snowbird Conference Center, featured Dr. Thomas Lickona as the keynote speaker. A special focus of this year's annual conference was an evening presentation especially for parents. The second annual conference held in August of 1997, highlighted accomplishments of Utah schools in character development. The third annual conference, a Youth Conference held in August of 1998 in Park City, Utah, was attended by students, youth leaders, and teachers. The conference involved participants in two days of activities on team building, leadership, and fostering inclusion and caring in youth groups and schools. The fourth annual conference occurred in June of 1999 in Park City, Utah, in collaboration with the Utah Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (UASCD) and was attended by educators from communities throughout Utah.

Annual conferences were always well attended, with 350-400 participants each year, and many more who wanted to attend but could not be accommodated due to space limitations. The last conference included over 420 participants and an additional 70 Utah educators who made presentations on a variety of character education topics, in addition to keynotes by Dr. Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director of ASCD in Washington, D.C., and Dr. Charles Haynes, Senior Scholar for the First Amendment Center, Vanderbilt University.

Evaluation Workshops. Evaluation workshops were held independently of other activities, as well as during community workshops, curriculum workshops, and annual conferences. Participants helped plan evaluation activities and timelines, critiqued evaluation instruments and received information about how to administer, collect, and return evaluation information. In addition, educators were involved in professional development regarding the purpose of evaluation, how to conduct a sound evaluation, appropriate use of quantitative and qualitative data, analyzing the results of both quantitative and qualitative data collected at their schools, and using evaluation data to plan and modify their character development initiatives. Participants from first-year schools also were involved in action research training that introduced them to the five steps of the action research cycle and provided guided experience in reflective thinking and interviewing. Action research has received additional focus in Utah since the grant ended. See the last section of the report, the Epilogue, for an update on character development activities that have occurred since that time.

Character Education Facilitators Strand. During the third and fourth years of the grant interested individuals participated in additional professional development activities designed to help them provide character education inservice in their schools and school districts. At the Annual Conference in August of 1997, and at the Community Workshop in October of 1997, a concurrent strand enabled facilitators to participate in interactive professional development experiences with a staff development expert from Alpine School District. Facilitators learned a variety of strategies for engaging adult learners, structuring staff development sessions, making dynamic presentations, and encouraging follow up activities. Many of the educators who participated in this strand have provided professional development in their own schools and districts and have actively mentored new schools and school districts as they implemented their character development initiatives. During the final year of the grant educators were invited to develop facilitation skills through participation in the Community Conference and other professional development activities. Utah has a cadre of presenters with expertise in a wide variety of areas that facilitate local inservices as well as statewide conferences, drawing on expertise that has been developed in Utah through years of professional development opportunities.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Collaborative Development and Implementation of Evaluation

The evaluation of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development was a collaborative model that involved grant participants in planning and conducting the evaluation. The evaluator initially met with the Evaluation Advisory Committee that consisted of the project director, a statistician and a curriculum coordinator from the USOE, and a character education coordinator from each of the participating school districts. After discussing the proposed evaluation design and possible instruments, the evaluator formulated an evaluation plan that consisted of both formative and summative evaluation. Each evaluation activity was designed with three primary objectives: 1) to provide valid information to document the implementation of the project; 2) to evaluate the successful accomplishment of project goals; and 3) to provide comprehensive staff development for educators in evaluation. The evaluator employed specific strategies to build positive, collaborative relationships with schools; develop ownership of the evaluation process and results; contribute to the continued professional development of educators; and encourage the utilization of evaluation results to modify approaches to character development. Educators from participating schools reviewed character education surveys for possible use in evaluating the project, made suggestions regarding evaluation activities and timelines, helped develop and administer evaluation instruments, and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data.

Focus of the Evaluation

The evaluation of the project included both formative and summative evaluation. Since character development programs are still relatively new there is much to be learned about how a character development initiative should be implemented to ensure lasting change, as opposed to a superficial focus on values that fades over time. A major intent of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development was to identify a successful, collaborative state model for character development that could be replicated by others. For this reason, the evaluation utilized a great deal of qualitative information and focused heavily on formative evaluation, especially during the first two years (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994).

Formative. The formative evaluation described the overall implementation of the project, as well as the process used at the school, district, and state level to implement the character education initiative. The evaluator was a participant observer at all major project activities including the community workshops, the curriculum development and integration workshops, the training of character education workshop facilitators, and the annual conferences. In addition, the evaluator was involved in the development or review of materials produced by and about the initiative such as the Character Education Charter; the rubric for curriculum development that focused on the integration of values; the handbook that describes the implementation and evaluation of the grant; newsletters, articles and special publications about character development originating at the state level; and the preparation of all reports. Information describing the project and its implementation was collected through annual school surveys, interviews of key personnel, and an implementation survey developed by the evaluator in collaboration with project participants.

Summative. The summative evaluation focused on documenting changes that occurred in schools and communities as a result of the character development initiative. The summative evaluation addressed several of the factors suggested in the federal regulations to evaluate the success of the initiative including: the extent of staff involvement in the initiative, the degree of parent and community involvement in the school, changes in school climate, and changes in student discipline.

The summative evaluation utilized: 1) pre and post testing of students, parents, and staff on the Character Development Survey; 2) post testing of students on Knowledge of Character Education Concepts; 3) the analysis of pre and post data on student discipline; and 4) an Implementation Survey administered to teachers at the end of the grant to document professional development and classroom instructional strategies. Surveys of character education site facilitators also were conducted annually to provide anecdotal evidence of the effects of the program. The project director completed an action research project that provided both formative and summative information.

Limitations of the Design

One of the difficulties in developing an adequate design to evaluate this project included the complex structure of the grant. Rather than starting with one group of schools and collecting data throughout the four years, schools entered and exited the grant every two years. Since each of these schools was in a different stage of development and implementation of character education, this made the collection of data quite complicated.

In addition, due to Utah's emphasis on character education, schools participating in the grant had varying amounts of prior involvement in character development activities. Some schools had no experience, many schools had several years' experience, and some schools had extensive experience (ten to 16 years). As the evaluator jokingly told participants, *"While from an educational standpoint this is wonderful, from an evaluation standpoint it is a real nightmare."* To address this issue the evaluator used retrospective analysis, asking participants to describe previous activities in the area of character education and their effects. They were then asked to indicate how involvement in the grant had contributed to their efforts.

A third problem, which is typical of many evaluations, is the time required to become acquainted with the project and to develop instruments. Because very little research or information existed about character education, the project and the evaluation evolved simultaneously. This meant that some of the "baseline" data was collected well into the project and, therefore, decreased opportunities to detect true change. It was suggested that educators in participating schools use evaluation data for program planning purposes as well as to evaluate the impact of their activities. In some cases, "post" assessments were omitted because insufficient time had elapsed. Participants were cautioned to view each piece of data as only part of the picture and to rely on their professional judgment, as well.

A final limitation was in the sampling procedures used to administer evaluation instruments. The evaluation design used several approaches to sampling to obtain reasonably reliable data across the project as a whole, as well as at the individual school level, while attempting to control costs and decrease disruptions in the school setting. When possible, the entire population was sampled, e.g. all teaching and administrative staff at all schools, all site facilitators, etc. When this was not possible due to the sheer size of the population, a sample was selected, e.g. randomly selected intact classes of students and their parents. While the small samples of students and parents did not allow schools to reliably generalize the results to their schools, they provided an adequate sample across the project to evaluate changes in student knowledge of values, behavior, and morale. Schools were provided the option of sampling additional students or parents at their own cost using grant funds.

Procedures

A character education site facilitator was identified by each school to be the contact person for the implementation and evaluation of the grant. The site facilitator (and others) attended inservice on evaluation and action research, administered or arranged for the administration of evaluation surveys,

collected and analyzed data, and provided completed surveys and written summaries to the evaluator. Considering the complexity of the grant structure and the number of schools and districts participating, this process worked fairly well. Some refinements to the process of distributing and collecting evaluation information were made during the third and fourth years of the grant. For example, evaluation packets containing all surveys and instructions were provided at one time at meetings attended by site facilitators, rather than mailed throughout the year. To ensure the timely receipt of evaluation information, schools forwarded completed surveys in one packet to their district coordinators, instead of mailing them individually to the evaluator. This process improved coordinators' understanding of and involvement in the evaluation process and resulted in more complete and timely information from the schools.

Instruments and Sampling

The evaluator developed numerous instruments to collect both formative and summative evaluation information throughout the four years of the grant. Each instrument is described below along with the sampling procedures. A summary of the evaluation information collected during the four years of the grant appears at the end of this section.

Workshop Evaluations. A form was developed to evaluate each of the major project activities including the philosophy workshop, the curriculum development and integration workshops, the community workshops, the annual conferences, the character education workshop facilitators strand, and each of the action research and evaluation workshops. Typically, the forms consisted of several statements about the workshops with five point Likert-type scales and several open-ended questions. The workshop evaluations requested information about the knowledge gained by participants, the most beneficial aspects of the workshops, and suggestions regarding future workshops. After each workshop, a site visit report was prepared by the evaluator that summarized the information collected through workshop evaluations. Feedback provided by the evaluator was used throughout the duration of the grant to plan for future events.

Site Facilitator Survey. A survey was developed by the evaluator to be completed by the character education site facilitator at each school at the end of each year of participation in the grant. The survey provided demographic information about participating schools, a description of character development activities and their effects prior to the grant, a description of character development activities funded by the grant, and an analysis of the effects of grant-funded activities on students, teachers, families, and the community. As part of this survey, site facilitators at each school calculated baseline data on student discipline and reported any changes for subsequent years of involvement in the grant.

Interviews of Key Personnel. To supplement information collected through surveys, key personnel involved in the implementation of the grant were interviewed at the end of the third year of the grant, including the project director, the person responsible for coordinating grant activities in each participating school district, and the person who facilitated the character education faciltators strand.

Character Development Survey. As part of the collaborative development of the evaluation, project participants were asked to critique three character education surveys for possible use in evaluating the effects of the project. After careful review, the teachers concluded that none of the surveys met the needs of the project. Therefore, over the next six months the evaluator developed and pilot-tested a Character Development Survey (CDS) for parents, students, and staff. The survey for all groups contained a common core of 26 items measuring kindness/caring, respect/responsibility,

fairness/honesty, and school expectations. The parent survey contained an additional 11 items measuring parent involvement and parent-staff relationships. The faculty survey contained corollary items on these topics and an additional nine items measuring staff relationships and involvement in character development activities. The student survey used a three point Likert-type scale with response choices of "almost always," "sometimes," and "hardly ever," while the parent and staff surveys utilized a five-point response code. Student scores were converted to a five-point scale for data analysis. In addition to being developed for Utah's evaluation, the CDS was adapted for use in the evaluation of Missouri's character education program.

In addition to the Likert-type items, the surveys contained two open-ended questions developed by the evaluator. Schools had the option of including additional open-ended questions of their choice. These questions provided an opportunity to collect less structured information about the effects of the project, as well as an opportunity for participants to learn how to analyze qualitative data. Participants also learned how to analyze quantitative information as they tabulated responses and calculated means for items on the post-test of the CDS and calculated student discipline statistics.

The CDS was administered once during the first two years of the grant, in December of 1996. This was approximately 12 months into the grant for the first year's participants and four months into the grant for the second year's participants. For this reason, schools were encouraged to use the information for program planning purposes and post-testing was made optional. During the last two years of the grant, the CDS was administered pre and post during the 1997-98 school year and as a post survey only at the end of the 1998-99 school year. For additional information about the CDS including reliability and subscales, see the Statistical Appendix beginning on page 49.

Student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts. A framework for a cognitive measurement of student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts was used to assess student familiarity with the values emphasized in individual schools. One class of students in one grade at each level (elementary, middle/junior high, and high school) was randomly selected to define and give an example of the school values. Teachers then scored the responses and reported on a summary sheet the number of correct definitions and examples of behavior representing desired values. This survey was administered twice during the four-year grant period.

Character Education Facilitators Survey. To assess the impact of the character education facilitators strand, the evaluator developed a data collection form for facilitators to complete after each inservice they conducted during the third year of the grant. In addition, facilitators completed a survey in June of 1998 that asked them to reflect on some of the positive outcomes for them personally and professionally as a result of participating in this strand, any obstacles they encountered in conducting inservice around the state, and suggestions they might have for improving this strand during the final year of the grant.

Implementation Survey. This survey was developed in collaboration with grant participants to assess the extent of teacher involvement in professional activities related to character education, as well as the type of instructional approaches to character development utilized by individual classroom teachers. While other surveys looked at school wide approaches to implementation of character education initiatives, this survey provided the opportunity to find out how randomly selected teachers implemented character education in their classrooms.

Character Education Progress Report. Schools that were no longer participating in the grant during the final year were asked to complete a Character Education Progress report which provided an update on character education activities that had occurred in their schools in each of the following

areas: staff development, fostering a positive school climate, family and community involvement, curriculum, student activities, and policies and procedures. They also were asked to describe how their character initiatives affected staff involvement, school climate, student behavior, student achievement, student participation in extracurricular activities, and parent and community involvement. Finally they were asked how much difference their participation in the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development made in their overall efforts in character education.

Table 2 summarizes the evaluation instruments and sampling procedures used each year of the grant.

TABLE 2.
Data Collected to Evaluate Grant
1995-99

INSTRUMENT	PRE	POST	SAMPLE
Workshop Evaluations		After each workshop	All participants at each workshop
Site Facilitator Survey		5/96 5/97 5/98 5/99	All schools
Interviews of Key Personnel		6/98	Character Education District Coordinators and USOE Character Education Specialist
Character Development Survey	12/96 10/97	Optional 5/98 5/99	STAFF: All staff in all schools STUDENTS: One randomly selected class in all schools PARENTS: of students above
Student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts	12/96	5/98	One randomly selected class in all schools (same as CDS above)
Character Education Facilitators Survey		6/98	All character education facilitators
Classroom Implementation Survey		5/99	25% random sample of teachers in all schools
Character Education Progress Report		5/99	All schools no longer participating in grant during 98-99 school year

IMPLEMENTING CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS

Studying the Implementation Process

A major focus of the formative evaluation was to document the implementation of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development—how the project was implemented, what activities occurred, who was involved, etc. However, the formative evaluation went far beyond merely documenting the project's implementation. An important goal of the project was to provide a successful model for character education initiatives so that it could be replicated by other schools, school districts, and state departments of education. With this in mind, the evaluator's task was to participate in and observe the unfolding of the project, to provide periodic feedback that could be used to revise and improve the implementation, and finally, to be able to describe those elements that characterize a successful model for implementing a character education initiative.

The formative evaluation evolved throughout the project's implementation to reflect the project director and evaluator's increasingly sophisticated knowledge about character education, professional development, school restructuring, and cutting-edge research about the brain and how we learn. Continued conversations between the project director and the evaluator led to a focus on three important questions:

1. What is a successful model for implementing a character development initiative?
2. How can character development become an enduring mission of our educational system?
3. How can character development initiatives provide the framework to transform schools and ultimately human relationships?

To answers these questions, the evaluator was a participant-observer in all grant-sponsored activities, analyzed several hundred pages of information submitted by schools regarding the activities implemented under the auspices of the grant, and read recent literature in a variety of related areas, such as character development, evaluation, brain research, and staff development.

Overview of the Implementation Process

Most schools went through a similar process as they implemented character education activities. This process typically included: planning, professional development, parental and community involvement, purchasing/developing curriculum materials, implementation of a wide variety of instructional activities and approaches, and evaluation. Although almost all of these elements were present in each school's approach to implementation, they did not necessarily occur in the same order and often occurred simultaneously. For ease of discussion, each of these elements will be discussed in the order typically used by schools. Because the instructional activities and approaches to character development form the bulk of the implementation process they will be discussed in a separate section.

Planning

The focus on planning provided by the grant was invaluable—schools were required to develop an action plan and were allowed to use grant funding to pay teachers to be involved in this critical step. Schools in the United States are plagued by "educational fads," partially due to a lack of time and resources to support adequate planning about how to integrate successful approaches and strategies into the ongoing business of schools. Educators involved in the Utah Community Partnership for

Character Development were adamant about wanting character development to become a permanent part of their schools' missions and not another passing fad. Consequently, they carefully and thoroughly planned how to go about implementing character education.

Analysis of data from site facilitator surveys indicated that schools effectively utilized the planning process and framework suggested in grant-sponsored inservices. The smaller, rural districts involved in the grant developed district-wide action plans and often involved community representatives in the planning process. For example, one school commented, *"I think the most effective aspect of our effort was the community unity and dialogue that developed. Through the grant we were able to have a retreat where school people, business people, church people, and city government officials met together. We discussed character development in our cities and what we could do to foster continued growth. We developed a plan which included a monthly character theme that was posted in all the schools, city buildings and most of the businesses in Pleasant Grove and Lindon. The community-wide effort paid off with support at home, school, and work. Even the city water bill came with a message about character development."*

Larger school districts created partnerships centered around a high school cluster (one high school and all of the feeder elementary and middle schools) and created cluster-wide action plans. For example, the Hunter Community Partnership was formed in Granite School District and schools involved in this partnership developed individual action plans and goals in keeping with the overall goals established by the partnership. Often the high school took the initiative to share ideas and strategies with feeder schools.

Individual schools mentioned the time they devoted to planning—developing an action plan and timeline, forming a character education committee, writing mission statements, and meeting with parents, community members, and educators from other schools in their feeder groups. Especially if the schools had no previous focus on character development, the initial planning activities were emphasized. Time was taken to discuss character education, to involve parents and teachers in identifying values, to share information from grant-sponsored activities, and to select materials. All of this was critical to the success of the initiatives. During the first two years of the grant, several schools mentioned that their staffs were initially cautious, hesitant, or even negative about character education. The site facilitators at these schools felt it was especially important to plan well, proceed slowly, and involve teachers in each step of development to create the "buy-in" necessary for the successful integration of character education throughout the school.

For example, one school commented that their teachers had become aware of the need for teaching values and felt this to be, *"a real step forward because we were at a point in our school where there was extreme resistance to any new programs due to a real or perceived overload of new programs."* They went on to comment that by the end of the year, *"through careful introduction, the faculty was comfortable with the program and willing to implement the teaching of values in their classrooms."* Another school reported that their faculty was *"hesitant to try another 'program' because of the time and effort given before with little or no measurable results."* They proceeded slowly and spent much time and effort on planning, organizing, and writing curriculum and were beginning to see support for character development in their school at the end of their two-year's involvement in the grant.

There was a distinct difference in comments made by site facilitators during the last two years of the grant. The focus on character education, both locally and nationally, had provided visible support to the idea that character education is an important part of the mission of public schools. Schools much more quickly focused on implementing and integrating character education, rather than devoting time to discussing why they should address character development. Regardless of the schools' initial

attitudes towards character development, many commented that the grant provided direction and focus. One elementary school summarized, *"All of the planning has given our efforts a more organized approach and a more solid foundation on which to work."*

Professional Development

Professional development was a major focus of the grant and participants were encouraged to seek, as well as to create, opportunities for professional growth. The project director, the evaluator, and others involved in the grant were well aware of the link between staff development and successful educational change and saw the project as an opportunity to create lasting changes in how children are educated using character development as the framework.

In *"A New Vision for Staff Development,"* Sparks and Hirsch (1997) quote one of the leaders in school reform, Ann Lieberman. *"She believes that 'teachers must have an opportunity to discuss, think about, try out, and hone new practices' by taking new roles* (e.g. teacher-as-researcher, character education facilitator), *creating new structures,* (e.g. community partnerships), *working on new tasks* (e.g. developing curriculum, learning to facilitate workshops, analyzing research data), *and creating a culture of inquiry." What characterizes these examples of professional development is that their life span is not one or two days. Instead, they become part of the expectations for teachers' roles and form an integral part of the culture of a school."* (The examples in parentheses are activities associated with the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development.)

This approach to staff development was reflected in all grant-sponsored inservices and in the evaluation process itself. Schools were provided with information and a framework to implement character education, but the specifics (such as the values to be taught, the approach to be taken, the materials to be used) were left entirely to the discretion of individual schools and districts. Professional development activities often used local talent and highlighted successful approaches in Utah schools. They provided opportunities for participants to reflect on practices with colleagues, and to create their own knowledge. As Lieberman says, *"People learn best through active involvement and through thinking about and becoming articulate about what they have learned. Processes, practices, and policies built on this view of learning are at the heart of a more expanded view of teacher development that encourages teachers to involve themselves as learners—in much the same way as they wish their students would."*

Teachers and administrators attended character education inservices conducted by the grant such as community workshops, curriculum workshops, annual conferences, and evaluation/action research sessions. Grant funding was used to provide the substitutes that enabled teachers to attend these activities, to cover costs associated with attending conferences, and to pay teachers' stipends for time spent developing and implementing character education initiatives.

In addition, teachers were engaged in a wide variety of other professional development activities. Teachers attended many conferences, classes, and workshops focusing on character development, a sampling of which includes: Steven Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People training, the local and national Community of Caring Conferences, service-learning, Love and Logic classes, and Tribes inservice. Other state character education professional development opportunities included workshops in character building teaching strategies, integrating values into the curriculum, and ethics in content areas. It was exciting to see teachers, many of whom had never before taken a leadership role, successfully conducting inservice at their own schools to present information acquired from grant-sponsored activities and from other meetings and conferences.

Some schools used grant funding to purchase materials such as books, videotapes, and audiotapes to contribute to professional development. Teachers participated in retreats, planning sessions at the school and district level, and school committees; compiled, developed, and distributed curriculum materials to colleagues; and were involved in all aspects of the implementation of the evaluation.

Educators felt the wealth of professional development opportunities provided by the grant was invaluable. One elementary school commented, *"Training has been an incredible tool to help provide a foundation for understanding what teaching values is all about. Without the training it would have been impossible to thoroughly inservice a faculty."*

Community Involvement

The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development focused on community involvement from the beginning when representatives from many community groups were first involved in developing the Charter that guided the project. Schools continued to use a variety of creative approaches to involve the community, and especially parents, in the character development mission. Community members were involved in initial planning meetings as participating school districts and high school clusters began implementing the character initiatives, and continued to be involved through meetings of character building-coalitions, donation of funds, and involvement in school activities. For example, parents in Alpine School District established in 1993 a community group called the Character Connection that was devoted to character development; they used the grant to expand the work of this very successful partnership. Schools often asked business partners to help support school activities. For example, one school held a very successful Bagels and Books activity and local businesses provided bagels, cream cheese, juice, and coffee for this early morning family event.

Community members were invited as inspirational speakers to make presentations to students and parents. For example, one school invited Senator Jake Garn, who showed a video on his space flight and spoke to elementary students on the challenges and opportunities they would have in life. A local resident and Olympic athlete who became paralyzed from a gunshot wound spoke to students about meeting challenges, setting goals, and persevering. Schools reported that guest speakers were inspirational to students, staff, and families. A high school organized a series of talks by community members during lunch hours in which positive adult role models shared information on topics like goal setting, self-esteem, preparation for careers, and applying to college.

Wasatch High School, which was honored as an Exemplary Program by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges for its approach to character education, created a Wasatch High School Hall of Fame as a community-wide effort to recognize outstanding individuals in the community. This was particularly interesting, because they used the Hall of Fame to deliberately alter a negative aspect of their school's culture. They stated in information provided to the evaluator, *"In our community we often good naturedly, or otherwise, excuse ourselves from making mistakes in our grammar, math, etc. by saying, 'It's okay, I went to Wasatch.'"*

They realized that this statement unwittingly sent a message of mediocrity and consciously set about to change this attitude through the Hall of Fame. They continued, *"By establishing a Hall of Fame we would like to expose our students not only to the great accomplishments of those connected with Wasatch High School and our community, but to the quality of the individuals and the values they have incorporated into their lives. We hope that by focusing on the traditions of excellence in both the personal and professional lives of those who have gone before, that students will be encouraged to build on those same traditions, that they will feel part of a community of excellence and caring."*

In addition, Wasatch created a character education video, *"The Wasatch Plan,"* documenting character education in their school. In a similar vein, a secondary school in Alpine district established a Heroes program to recognize heroic community members, faculty, and students.

Parental Involvement

Schools attempted to involve all parents in their character education mission through values-centered assemblies, special school-wide events, newsletters, service projects, and family homework assignments. Parents also served on character education committees, attended grant-sponsored inservice, analyzed survey data, and were involved in a variety of school activities. One Granite high school established a Parent Resource Center equipped with literature on parenting, coping with teens, helping children be successful in school, and other topics.

An important early stage of implementing character education initiatives was focusing the attention of staff, students, and families on the character development mission of the school. This involved a public display of commitment to this important mission, communication with families about character development, and involvement in a variety of activities related to values.

Public Display of Values. Values were publicly displayed in a variety of ways. Schools proclaimed their focus on values on the school marquis; by hanging banners, posters, and cartoons reflecting values throughout the school; by displaying student work related to values in special display cases and on bulletin boards; and by designing school t-shirts with values-related logos. For example, in one school district, colors were assigned to each of the values and on designated days staff and students would dress in that color to call attention to the value that was being emphasized. An elementary school purchased magnets displaying Community of Caring values that were sent home to all families along with the Governor's publication, *"What's the Value of Teaching Values? A Discussion Guide for Parents and Educators."*

Newsletters. Newsletters were an effective way to convey information to families and featured articles describing the federal grant, explaining the school's approach to character development, defining the values being taught by the school, recognizing students and staff of good character, and suggesting ideas for family activities to extend the school's focus on character development. Many excellent newsletters were reviewed by the evaluator.

Homework Assignments. Homework assignments further involved the family in character development activities. Frequently students received some sort of incentive such as an end-of-the-year activity (roller skating, pizza party or certificate) for completion of family homework activities. Schools in the Utah Community Partnership developed many creative homework assignments. One school's assignment on caring included such items as writing a story or poem about caring, making a pledge not to fight or argue with family members for a whole day and writing about how it felt, drawing a picture of things you care about, and calling or writing relatives to let them know you care. Another school sent home student activity sheets that contained references to books for parents and children on respect and suggested activities such as interviewing a person you respect, showing respect to parents by doing what they ask without complaining, and reading a book with family members followed by discussion of how characters showed respect.

Special School Events. Families also were involved in school-wide events that recognized students' good character, promoted family time, and celebrated the diversity of the student body. Multicultural events were popular at many of the schools since the ethnic makeup of the Salt Lake City area has become increasingly diverse in recent years. Often parents were used as presenters at

multicultural celebrations and as inspirational speakers. Family events were reported to be well attended—one elementary school reported over 700 family members attending their end of the year fiesta. The Winter Festival, featuring instrumental, choral, and dance performances by 500 students in seven schools in Granite district, was attended by 1400 students and parents.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND APPROACHES

Materials and Resources

The majority of schools used grant funds to purchase, adapt, or produce materials for use by teachers, students, and families in character development activities. The materials and resources were very eclectic and were used to support the schools' goals rather than providing a "cookbook" approach to character education. This is an important distinction because it is more likely to result in the incorporation of values across the school culture, as opposed to an add-on program that might disappear as interest wanes and other topics compete for attention. Michael Fullan (1991) states, *"The greatest problem faced by school districts and schools is not resistance to innovation, but the fragmentation, overload, and incoherence resulting from the uncritical acceptance of too many different innovations."*

A few schools purchased curriculum materials for use by classroom teachers such as Tribes, Love and Logic, What Kids Need to Succeed, and videotapes to accompany the *Children's Book of Virtues.* Many schools developed their own curriculum and distributed it to all teachers in the school. Schools also provided information and materials that could be incorporated into existing curriculum and lesson plans, but left the specifics up to individual teachers. For example, several schools gave teachers lists of children's literature and resources related to values that had been distributed at grant-sponsored inservices, such as the community workshop. Schools also purchased resource books and videotapes for their professional libraries or as reference materials for parents.

Teaching About Values

School staffs were involved in reading, planning, discussing, developing, and implementing character education activities through classroom instruction, service projects, school-wide events, extracurricular activities, clubs, and student leadership organizations. Although initially only a core group of teachers may have been involved in the character development efforts, most schools attempted to involve all teachers as quickly as possible, often by dividing the responsibility for producing curriculum, planning a values-related assembly, or providing ideas and resources to enable teachers to incorporate values throughout the curriculum.

A typical approach was to use a value as a monthly teaching theme for classroom and school-wide activities. For example, several schools used the Building Esteem in Students Today (BEST) program. As described by one school, *"The BEST program involves having a theme each month which is introduced by a designated grade level. There are program goals that enhance the climate within the school and build on students' character strengths. The program involves everyone within the school community and includes yearly activities."* Another school taught character education lessons that were called, "30 Minute Miracles." These lessons, presented twice a month to each class, focused on topics such as holding grudges, self-talk, stress management, anger, conflict resolution, peer pressure, responsibility, and accepting differences.

Many schools made creative use of a multiple-intelligences approach to character development, highlighting student art work, singing and signing character related songs, reciting school pledges, and producing plays and puppet shows. One school presented values awareness assemblies developed around fairy tale themes and another school rewrote historical events, such as what would have happened if George Washington had lied about cutting down the cherry tree.

Integrating Values Throughout the School Culture

Many schools realized the importance of moving beyond an introduction to values through isolated activities to a well-coordinated approach to the integration of values throughout the school including such areas as curriculum, service projects, classroom management techniques, extracurricular activities, and school discipline polices.

Curriculum. For example one school commented, *"Our action plan has changed slightly from the onset as we have tried to emphasize teacher training and modeling of the values rather than just a 30-minute monthly spotlight. The grant is allowing us to meet as departments to implement values into the existing curriculum. This is proving to be most effective as teachers have a 'sharing time' with one another to evaluate what works and what doesn't."* Another school felt that their attempts to focus on character development prior to the grant failed because, in their words, *"We didn't have a specific goal or plan for teaching character development. We failed to take an important step...integrating character development into our curriculum."*

Salt Lake School District established as part of their student education plans, district benchmarks for student performance that had direct applications to character development. Granite School District used the Community of Caring program to provide a framework for integrating values across the curriculum in the form of a comprehensive three-year plan.

Several schools provided examples of how character education had been integrated into the ongoing curriculum. An elementary school indicated that one of their teachers used a technology grant to make a hyper studio production of the service-learning activities that had occurred at the school. Another school integrated two of their school's values, respect for family and family values into a Big 6 research project. The project culminated in a Family Ties Fair that included character building activities and student presentations of their research projects to family members and guests. A Salt Lake elementary school indicated how well their character education program was integrated in their curriculum with this comment, *"The Tribes philosophy has grown and entwined itself so deeply into our everyday curriculum that I doubt if most teachers even think of it as anything different anymore."*

Individual schools provided evidence of an organized approach to the integration of character development throughout the school. An elementary school gave an example of how character education and academics had been integrated in their reading program, Success for All. The reading program incorporated values-based literature, conflict resolution, and cooperative learning. They said, *"This process has proven very effective for our students who have not been very good team players in the past."* A secondary school developed a detailed process to integrate values through existing school committees and department chairs. At several middle schools, values were incorporated into existing, as well as new classes. Other secondary schools met to discuss how values could be incorporated throughout the curriculum resulting in service requirements in history classes, discussion of ethical dilemmas in experiments in science classes, essay contests, literature, and mission statements in English classes, and discussion of good sportsmanship and honesty in athletic classes and sports events.

Service Projects. In addition to learning about values through classroom instruction, students, staff, and families had many opportunities to experience "values in action," such as service projects and service-learning. According to a study by Brandeis University, students participating in service-learning are more active learners and perform better in school than peers. Service to others was a central aspect of the schools' focus on character development—almost every school was involved in at least one, and sometimes many, service projects or service-learning activities throughout the school

year. These included service to the school community such as peer tutoring, reading buddies, school beautification projects, and teacher recognition programs planned by students, as well as community efforts such as raising money for the homeless, providing Christmas gifts to families in need, recycling, and cleaning and refurbishing neighborhood parks. One high school in Salt Lake City School District raised $14,000 for Operation Smile, an organization that provides surgery for children with facial deformities. A Boy Scout Troop sponsored by an elementary school helped make a presentation to the city government that resulted in a $16,800 grant being awarded for scouting activities. Another elementary school planned a community garden and built an outdoor mural made of tiles that was a community-wide effort involving students, parents, teachers, and business partners. Classes also raised money to purchase bird feeders and seed, garden tools, and flowers. One elementary school chose a theme of "Children Helping Children" for their service project. They raised funds for the Primary Children's Medical Center to purchase a stereo for the teen room; donated books, games, and crafts items; and made quilts.

Several of the high schools involved feeder schools in a variety of activities such as providing tickets for elementary students to attend high school musicals and athletic events, tutoring limited English proficient students, and arranging special events such as free swimming and field trips to the children's museum. See Table 3 for a listing of the types of service projects in which schools engaged.

TABLE 3
Service Projects

TYPE OF SERVICE
Millions of Pennies for the Homeless
Operation Smile
YWCA Giving Tree for Teen Parents
Food Drives
Involvement with Senior Citizens Centers
School and Neighborhood Clean-Ups
School With No Name Recycling Project
Make-a-Wish Foundation
Blood Drive for Utah Blood Bank
Hunter Parade of Trees (donation of Christmas gifts for families in need)
Sub for Santa
Quilts for Homeless Shelter and American Indian Foundation
Quarters for Christmas
Halloween and Valentine Candy for Homeless Shelter
Donations to Primary Children's' Medical Center
Tutoring
Arranging Field Trips and Activities for Younger Students
Participation in Staff Recognition and Appreciation Events
Fund-Raising to Support a Teacher and Materials for an African Village
Project Primate Fundraiser for Hogle Zoo
Welcome Kits to School Neighborhood

Particularly noteworthy was the nomination of two schools as National Service-learning Leader Schools—Dixie High School in St. George and Horizonte Instruction and Training Center in Salt Lake City, both schools that participated in the Utah Community Partnership for Character

Development. Dixie High School in St. George, part of Washington schools, integrated service-learning throughout the high school. Seventy percent of their students are involved in service-learning activities through a variety of opportunities such as a Service-Learning Academy (selected by 30% of the student body as their first choice), enrollment in a service-learning class, serving as board members for a variety of state and community groups, participating in school clubs and organizations that require service, making presentations about service-learning at state conferences, and being a member of RASK, a group of students who practice Random Acts of Selfless Kindness. Two of the school's service projects have won national recognition. Making Spirits Bright was a service project in which students raised over $4,000 to purchase and construct a computer lab for preschool children with disabilities. This project received recognition as one of the top 100 service projects in the United States and was awarded a grant from the Points of Light Foundation. Friendship Park, constructed at the Washington County Children's Justice Center by Dixie High students, was recognized by USA Today Magazine as one of the top 50 projects in the United States and also received a grant.

Horizonte is an alternative and adult program in Salt Lake School District that serves teen parents, adults working on high school completion, ESL students, and middle and high school students who need an alternative setting to be successful. The school incorporates service-learning into the curriculum and provides individualized educational and occupational plans for students that emphasize values and encourage service. Horizonte students have presented puppet shows about children with disabilities, raised money for Primary Children's Medical Center through the Festival of Trees, donated food to the Crossroads Urban Center and participated in many other projects. A Horizonte teacher commented, *"As the students took the donations of food and household items to Crossroads Urban Center, they were impressed that there were also members of their community who had very little and were in need of help. Since many of our students have faced poverty, hunger, and homelessness, they were aware of the significance of these problems. It was important to the students to feel that they were helping others with problem areas with which someone else had helped them in the past."*

Extracurricular Activities. In addition to classroom instruction and service projects, some schools indicated that they had begun integrating values into all of the school's extracurricular activities and clubs for students. One Washington school now requires all school clubs and organizations to include service, in order to retain their charter. Several schools established Help Us Give Service (HUGS) clubs that were developed by Katy Ballenger, who attended school in Granite School District and became Miss Teen Utah and Miss Teen of America. She explained that HUGS clubs were started, *"to give students the opportunity to be involved in a student-organized and student-run service club, to perform community service regardless of social groups or academic status, to promote leadership and to give students the opportunity to reap the rewards of volunteer service."*

Many schools provided innovative opportunities for students to develop leadership skills. At one high school, peer leaders did improvisational theater at feeder schools to teach values and peer refusal skills. At that same school, student body officers organized the involvement of students from feeder schools in service projects. Peer leadership groups at several schools planned Teen Forums on a variety of topics of interest and importance to teens. The forums provided an opportunity for students to grapple with important issues such as values, teen pregnancy, self-defense, stress management, self-esteem, valuing diversity, sexual harassment, drug prevention, problem-solving skills, and conflict resolution. In Washington School District, teens serve as voting board members of such community groups as Habitat for Humanity, the Youth City Council, and the Children's Justice Center. At the elementary level, at least one school established a student news team that reported on school activities and gave recognition to students and families who were contributing to the

community. The student reporters were visited by a local news anchor, given a tour of the studio, and watched a live newscast. The student news team also was featured on local news broadcasts.

Fostering a Positive School Climate

Improving the school climate was a goal for many schools and was addressed in a variety of ways including such approaches as: implementing student incentive programs, creating friendship groups, developing conflict resolution skills, and involving staff in activities to improve faculty relationships.

Student Incentives. The first step in fostering a positive school climate used by many schools was implementing student incentive programs to recognize students' good behavior and academic achievement. Many schools provided recognition of students' accomplishments through presentations at assemblies, displays of student work, and announcements over the intercom. Schools frequently gave students small incentives such as certificates, pencils, and school t-shirts or planned special activities such as pizza parties or roller skating to reward students' accomplishments at the end of the year. As part of one school's creative approach to conflict management, the principal visited each classroom presenting key concepts to avoid fights. As an incentive he told the students he would spend an entire day on the roof of the school throwing candy if the students could achieve an entire month with no student fights. In early November, it was "raining candy" at this elementary school.

Another school established a V.I.P. program, which stood for "Values Important to Pathfinders." Each month, a child who was practicing the school's five values was selected by the classroom teacher to receive a certificate, VIP pin, and a special lunch served at a table on the stage in the cafeteria. The children also wore badges that said, "I'm a VIP." At the end of the school year, one child from each grade level was selected as the recipient of the VIP of the Year award, and received an engraved medallion as well as had their name added to a plaque which was placed in their VIP Hall of Fame. The principal also selected one 5th grader to receive the VIP Principal's Award as recognition for consistently practicing positive values while attending elementary school.

An unusual student recognition program at a North Summit school was "Feat of the Week." Students and teachers nominated students who had done good deeds. But instead of placing a photograph of the student on display, the student's feet were photographed. Students then attempted to correctly identify the feet. Both the student who performed the noteworthy deed and the student who made the correct identification were rewarded!

Although many schools continued to use student recognition, some no longer rewarded students for positive behavior by using external motivation such as prizes or parties. For example, one elementary school commented, *"One of the effects of these activities has been the growth in caring about others. The students were very excited about their accomplishments and would support others next year. There were no parties given for the most food gathered or prizes for helping our friends in Africa, and yet there was a great deal of satisfaction."*

Friendship Groups. Schools used innovative approaches to grouping, such as cross-grade groups to introduce values, to help students feel a part of their school community, and to improve school climate. Several schools involved older students as peer tutors, mentors, or buddies for younger students. In an elementary school, students met two to four times monthly for a variety of activities such as reading books emphasizing values, writing stories, going on field trips, cleaning up the school environment, having holiday parties, etc. The school reported, *"The students really care about each other. Hugs are handed out each time the younger students see their buddies in the hall. It*

has improved the relations between students and also given teachers time to spend with each other and to become better acquainted."

Another school, whose mascot was the knight, established weekly "Round Table" groups, which were multi-age groups of students in grades 1-5, using teachers, administrators, secretaries, education aides, and parents as leaders. They felt the groups, which focused on discussion of values, had been one of the most positive aspects of their character education activities because they improved teacher morale, created greater school unity, resulted in teacher advocates for children with special needs, and helped children develop friendships.

A high school paired volunteer faculty members with a small group of incoming students to welcome them to the school and provide information about beginning high school. The teachers made home visits and met with the students during lunch throughout the school year. The school reported that the mentor groups resulted in long-lasting friendships, a 50% decrease in failing grades during the first quarter, and an 18% decrease in dropouts to alternative programs.

An elementary school provided Chinese style take-out boxes filled with gifts such as a poem that celebrates differences, a school map, candy, a pencil with a values slogan, crayons, etc. to welcome new students. Another elementary school established Big Friendly Groups, groups of students in grades K-5 that met twice a month with teachers to explore character related lesson plans and activities associated with the school's values.

Conflict Management. Programs that dealt with conflict management were an important part of the schools' approaches to addressing school climate and improving student behavior. Schools trained students as conflict mediators, taught problem solving and conflict resolution skills through Teen Forums, and provided opportunities to address student concerns about school. Although these programs were often in effect prior to the grant, they became more values focused. One high school provided a very powerful lesson for students about equality, fairness, and democracy in action. Students had noticed that minority students were underrepresented on the Student Senate. They stated, *"As a result of these concerns we held several forums to provide a (way) for students to voice ideas and solutions and to follow-up on action plans. This resulted in a Task Force of approximately 36 students empowered by the principal for the changing of the Constitution concerning representation on the Senate. They succeeded in a constitutional change requiring the representation come from districts based on five zip-codes."*

In addition to using peer mediation or conflict management programs, schools reported that they changed student discipline policies to reflect a character development focus. For example, one school said, *"A new school discipline policy was developed, accepted, and is now in use. It is clear, simple and provides for positive reinforcement as well as help in dealing with detriment to the school climate."* In another school that uses life skills as an organizing tool for their character development, a student-run court system is used to mediate conflicts. Student judges have been heard to ask, *"Which of the life skills do you need to improve so this won't happen again?"* An elementary school indicated that they had integrated character education into their established discipline program.

Staff Activities. Many schools made deliberate efforts to improve staff relationships by recognizing the contributions of staff members with articles in newsletters, notes from colleagues, and faculty get-togethers to celebrate successes. A staff recognition program at a high school described contributions of faculty members in a weekly publication and awarded each teacher a Community of Caring t-shirt. Another school involved students in designing and delivering surprises to teachers throughout the year to recognize their contributions to the school. Some staff activities, such as

potlucks and bowling tournaments, helped develop camaraderie and were instrumental in improving faculty relationships. One elementary school, whose mascot was the eagle, initiated a teacher recognition event in which staff members were recognized for excellent work with the motto, "The Eagle is Soaring." Upon receipt of this message, the faculty knew to meet early the next morning to celebrate with coffee and bagels their colleague's success. The recipient of the award was then responsible for passing the eagle along to another staff member deserving recognition.

Another school planned a special Secretary Appreciation Day in which all of the students and staff members signed the rays of a giant sun. The sun and a book entitled "You're Sunsational" which contained thank you notes from all staff members were presented to the school secretary while the entire school sang, "You are My Sunshine." The school commented, *"When Teacher Appreciation Week rolled around we found little notes and treats in our boxes and in the faculty room from none other than our wonderful secretary. Mutual good will and a sense of community were clearly heightened between everyone."*

HOW THE GRANT FACILITATED CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

Since many schools in Utah had already implemented character education activities, some for many years, schools were asked to indicate how the grant had contributed to their efforts. Two elements—funding and the teacher involvement framework provided by the grant—were vital to the success of the character education initiatives. Together they enabled schools to spend adequate time planning, developing, and implementing a comprehensive character development model. Concomitantly, they supported professional development of teachers and involved them in the kinds of activities such as planning and curriculum development that made the project their own. As a consequence, teachers were much more likely to be invested in the success of the initiatives. Finally, adequate funding provided the resources (such as curriculum, student incentives, etc.) to make the projects work.

Adequate Time to Plan and Develop Initiatives

It was apparent from written comments by participating schools that federal funding made it possible to devote the time required to plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive character development model. Especially in schools that were just getting started, this made a significant contribution. One school said, *"It would have been extremely difficult for us to effectively put this program in action without the federal grant money. It has been exceptionally time consuming to organize, inservice, plan, and implement this program."* Another school commented, *"The grant has made a tremendous difference in developing a school-wide character education plan. It has taken many hours of work to organize and implement this program"* and a third said, *"It has made the entire program possible without extra burdens on the school or teachers."*

The importance of the financial support to thoughtful planning was best summarized in the following comment, *"The financial support provided by the government has given us the opportunity to go to training sessions, work out a philosophy that is appropriate for our community, take time to work out an implementation plan for our school, and train the teachers in how to implement the plan. We have also found ways to generate an excitement among the community, as well as the faculty, for the program and the benefits that will come from it. Without the financial base provided by the program, we would not have been able to put in the time needed to develop the concept to a point that we can use it effectively."*

Sufficient Resources to Support Initiatives

Schools indicated how important the funding was to enable them to purchase the materials necessary to implement the character initiatives. One school said, *"The grant has given us the motivation and resources to focus more attention on this most important aspect of child development"* while another commented, *"The grant made it possible to enlarge our program to include the purchase of some wonderful materials we could only have dreamed of having before. The grant has provided a sense of urgency, which created more enthusiasm in the teachers as they had the opportunity to purchase materials that could be used immediately in the classroom. It contributed to a decrease in burnout as we were able to once again, work on yet another great idea, but for a change have the funds to make it come about!"*

The funding enabled schools to purchase materials as well as to pay teachers for development or adaptation of curriculum. One school stated, *"The financial support provided by the federal grant helped us implement much of our program. The money was used to purchase curriculum to support*

our values lessons. It purchased books and literature for teacher support and for them to further the activities and lessons in their individual classrooms. As was stated earlier by teachers, they are expected to add new curriculum and many times there is no support for them to do so. It was great to have money to be able to compensate, with a stipend, those teachers who wrote character education curriculum for the whole school."

Organization and Focus

Schools that had already devoted time to developing character education activities felt the grant provided a more organized focus and enabled them to expand their efforts. A site facilitator at one school commented, *"Before this grant, our character education program was a piece-meal approach which lacked depth. Now with this grant in place, our character education program has become more purposeful, organized, focused, and educationally effective.* Another site facilitator said, *"Support from the federal grant has helped us to expand our overall character education efforts. We have been able to implement more programs and activities that involve parents, students, business partners, etc. We are working to have all of our students involved in service projects both at the school and in the community before they graduate. And, we are working more closely with our feeder schools."* One school felt the grant had enabled them to provide more effective transitions between elementary, middle and high school. They said, *"The financial support has given us the funds to help us start meeting as a community and planning together to have an effective transition between each level of schooling as far as character education is concerned."*

Several schools felt the grant made a substantial difference in the expansion of their character education efforts. One school expressed the following opinion, *"The federal grant provided the opportunity to move ahead with character education. Without the grant, I think we were at a point where character education activities would have decreased instead of increased."* Another stated, *"The training that has been provided for us has given us our direction and focus. We've been able to pay teachers for their time writing curriculum, preparing displays, and planning the year's schedule and action steps. We've had money for materials to support our actions, especially for the purpose of training our faculty and staff. Without the grant money, we would not be implementing this program on a school-wide basis."* A school in Granite district said, *"The grant money has enabled the team to gain further understanding of what Community of Caring is and how to implement it at our school. Without the grant, our participation would have been practically nonexistent."*

In the next section of the report, the impact of the grant on educators, students, and school climate will be discussed. The results section is designed to stand alone, but additional information is provided in the Statistical Appendix for those who are interested in more detail.

IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

Three sources of data provided information about the impact of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development on educators. The Site Facilitator Survey completed annually by participating schools provided important anecdotal evidence of project impact. The Implementation Survey provided summary statistics regarding teachers' involvement in professional development activities and changes in teaching strategies and content. Finally, the Character Development Survey provided statistical evidence of significant changes in staff relationships. An analysis of information provided from these three sources indicated that participation in the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development impacted educators in five important ways. Participation:

1. Legitimized the teaching of values,
2. Created an awareness of the importance of character education,
3. Increased the level of educator involvement in character development efforts,
4. Contributed to professional development, and
5. Encouraged the use of effective teaching strategies for promoting character development in the classroom.

Legitimized the Teaching of Values

Comments made by teachers at grant-sponsored inservices and on written surveys indicated that the grant legitimized the teaching of values in the schools. For example, one site facilitator commented, *"It gives us license to teach right from wrong—something we have wanted, but weren't sure was 'professional.' With the support of the nation, state, and district, we are raising the standard expectations within our school and providing a safe and caring learning environment."* Another commented, *"As a cluster, confidence was gained to use the word 'value' rather than the softer term, character traits."* A third school summarized, *"Strength has come in numbers! It has come because of validation from the Utah State Office of Education, Alpine School District, the federal government, the Utah State Governor and Legislature, as well as our local city government, business and religious leaders, and families supporting the project. It has given them courage to take leaps in addressing this topic, once thought to be controversial."*

Created Awareness of Importance of Character Education

Schools that were in the early stages of implementing character education felt that the grant created an awareness of the importance of teaching values. For example, one school commented, *"The biggest impact that our character education efforts made during the last few months was on the teachers. They began to gain an awareness of the need for the teaching of values and including character education program in our school and community."* Another school said, *"The most obvious result of the implementation of character education into the school curriculum, has been an increased awareness of character values among faculty, staff, and community."*

In addition, the grant generated enthusiastic support from teachers, families, and the community as evidenced in the following comments. *"The faculty and staff and families in our school are excited to become involved in character development. Everyone sees a real need for such a focus." "Parents have spoken very positively about the newsletters and the home activity sheets. They have commented on how appreciative they are that we are trying to involve the home as much as possible with teaching the values." "With the implementation of the federal grant, the once hesitant, but supportive staff, has now taken a huge leap in the ownership of their significant role in helping shape a child's*

life and character. The character education movement has built strong, active links in the triangle of influence in a child's life—family, school, community."

These opinions were supported by statistical data. A random sample of teachers representing more than half the schools that participated in the grant provided a rating on the Implementation Survey of how important they thought it was for their schools to focus on character education. Using a 10-point scale with 1 indicating "unimportant" and 10 indicating "very important" both elementary and secondary teachers indicated that it was very important for their schools to focus on character development. The mean elementary teacher rating was 9.24, while the mean secondary teacher rating of the importance was 8.68.

Increased Involvement in Character Development Efforts

As teachers' awareness of the importance and legitimacy of teaching values in the school increased over time, the extent of their involvement in character education activities increased as well. On the CDS, which was administered pre and post to school staff members at all schools participating in the grant during the 1997-98 school year, respondents were asked to report how involved they were in their schools' character development efforts. Using a 10-point scale with 10 indicating "very involved," the mean level of involvement for elementary teachers was 6.34 on the pre survey and 6.92 on the post survey, while the mean level of involvement for secondary teachers was 6.13 on the pre survey and 6.96 on the post survey. This represented a statistically significant increase in involvement by both elementary ($t=3.10$, $p \leq .002$) and secondary school teachers ($t=3.11$, $p \leq .002$) in their schools' character development efforts.

The Implementation Survey provided an additional measure of teacher involvement that was similar to the CDS results. Both elementary and secondary teachers reported high levels of involvement with an average of 7.30 (on a 10-point scale) for elementary teachers and an average of 6.26 for secondary teachers.

Many schools commented on the increase in faculty and staff involvement in character education. One school said, *"We had only four faculty members who were not involved in some way with our character education program at the close of this school year. Teachers willingly participated in a variety of assemblies aimed at teaching character education."*

Contributed to Professional Development of Educators

It was apparent from site facilitator comments in the implementation section of the report that professional development was an important factor in contributing to the successful implementation of character education in the schools. By the end of the four-year grant, 93% of randomly selected teachers had attended at least one faculty meeting or inservice related to character development. Ninety percent of teachers had read articles about character education; 75% had collaboratively developed activities or curriculum; 63% had attended a conference, workshop or class about character development outside of grant-sponsored activities; 60% had participated on school committees related to character education; and 26% had presented inservice to colleagues. See Table 4.

TABLE 4.
Percent of Teachers Participating in Professional Development Activities
Related to Character Education

ITEM	K-6	7-12	OVERALL
Attended faculty meeting or inservice	95	89	93
Read articles	90	91	90
Developed activities/curriculum with colleagues	77	69	75
Attended conference, workshop or class	65	58	63
Participated in school committees	57	65	60
Presented inservice to colleagues	26	25	26

It is evident that in addition to creating a climate that was supportive of a school-wide focus on character education, the grant greatly contributed to the professional development of educators. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) state, *"Professional development today means providing occasions for teachers to reflect critically on their practice and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners"* (p. 597). Reading professional literature, developing curriculum, engaging in dialogue with colleagues about teaching and learning, participating in committees and presenting inservice to colleagues all are important ways of contributing to the professional growth of educators. The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development was instrumental in facilitating this type of professional development in both elementary and secondary schools.

Promoted the Use of Effective Teaching Strategies

Leming (1993), Lickona (1991), Waangard (1997) and others stress the importance of a variety of techniques in fostering student engagement and responsible behavior. For example, using class meetings and cooperative learning, developing student leadership skills through responsible involvement in determining classroom policies, and service-learning are important to the development of responsible young people. Leming (1993) commented in a review of effective character education programs, *"Several studies have shown that schools that seem to have an impact on student character respect students, encourage student participation in the life of the school, expect students to behave responsibly, and give them the opportunity to do so."* In addition, based on brain research and multiple intelligence theory, it is the evaluator's opinion that strategies which engage students, offer greater choice, and address differences in the ways in which students learn are an important part of effective character education programs. Teachers were asked to indicate whether or not they used a variety of these strategies in their classrooms.

Ninety-nine percent of elementary teachers and 88% of secondary teachers said they used cooperative learning or other strategies to teach students to work cooperatively. Ninety-three percent of elementary teachers and 82% of secondary teachers indicated they provided specific opportunities in their classrooms for students to develop leadership skills. Students were involved in procedures such as determining class rules and helping with jobs by 94% of elementary teachers and 75% of high school teachers. More than half of all teachers who responded to the Implementation Survey indicated they used class meetings to foster goal setting and problem solving skills. Students also were allowed choices in assignments, type of assessment, and grouping by 89% of elementary teachers and 78% of high school teachers. Teachers used class situations that arose to discuss values (99%), used rewards and recognition to encourage positive student behavior (96%), and devoted time to the teaching of

conflict resolution or peer mediation (78%). At the end of the four-year grant period, 86% of classroom teachers reported that they had developed their own values-focused curriculum that they used in their classrooms while an astounding 92% of elementary teachers and 88% of secondary teachers reported that they had integrated the teaching of values throughout their curriculum. Perhaps, most importantly, teachers were aware of their powerful influence on students; 99% said they consciously model good character in all of their interactions with students. See Table 5.

TABLE 5.
Percentage of Teachers Implementing
Character Education Strategies in Their Classrooms

ITEM	K-6	7-12	OVERALL
Consciously model good character	99	98	99
Use class situations to discuss values	100	95	99
Use student rewards/recognition	99	88	96
Use cooperative learning or other strategies to promote cooperation	99	88	95
Integrate values throughout curriculum	92	88	90
Develop student leadership skills	93	82	90
Involve students in determining class rules	94	75	89
Allow student choice in assignments and grouping	89	78	86
Use self-developed curriculum focusing on values	86	86	86
Teach conflict resolution or peer mediation	85	64	78
Provide opportunities for school service	78	63	73
Use class meetings to foster goal setting and problem solving	68	57	65
Provide opportunities for community service	51	37	47

In addition to the items on professional development and use of effective teaching strategies, teachers were asked what was the most significant change in their approach to teaching or the content of what they taught as a result of their involvement in character education. One hundred thirty-two teachers provided written responses to this question and the ideas substantiated many of the effective teaching practices delineated above.

Conscious Focus on Character in Curriculum. Many teachers said that they now consciously teach character education, some through specific character-related lessons and others through integrating character throughout the curriculum. For example, an elementary teacher commented, *"I have devoted a whole unit to teaching character education. This unit offers opportunities for the children to participate in activities that will help them to understand and apply these values."* A secondary teacher said, *"I use character education as a major portion of my teaching curriculum. I show videos about values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, compassion, self-discipline etc. I have created lesson plans that are specific to character education. We discuss local, school, community, and world problems and relate it to the values of character education. To put it simply, I teach all I can about character education."* A new elementary teacher stated, *"I am a first year teacher and I think the most significant experience I have had this year is to realize the importance of character education as part of my curriculum, or perhaps, even the basis of my curriculum. Learning to like themselves and others is a fundamental need for students, which precedes the acquisition of academic knowledge."* One teacher said, *"I have tried to make sure that character education is an explicit part of the curriculum. I make sure my students know exactly what good character traits are and how one acts if one has or wishes to acquire those traits."*

Teachers remarked on the importance of having a common language and a school-wide focus. An elementary teacher said, *"The biggest change for me has been having a common language with the TRIBES program and an awareness of issues that classroom teachers discuss during community circle that can be reinforced in other settings throughout the day."* Another elementary teacher said, *"It is helpful to me to have the reminder of monthly themes, school bulletin boards, and announcements on the PA system. It reminds me of stories I want to read that teach and reinforce that concept."* A third teacher said, *"Our school has organized a monthly program centered on character education values. As a teacher I discuss with my students the values that were taught during the assembly and we focus on the values all month."*

Many teachers commented that character education had already been an important part of their teaching, but school-wide participation had provided focus, support, and reinforcement. For example, one elementary teacher said, *"I haven't made any significant changes as a result of this program. But rather, it has provided support in practices I've been doing all along. It has provided me with an official "seal of approval" to continue. I do firmly believe in character education as a foundation for academic achievement and the social success of our future society."* Another teacher said, *"I have always taught character education. The changes I have made are simply additions to what I have already been doing."* Another teacher echoed this, *"I've always taught character development through situations that arise and activities designed to cause the students to learn from diversity and to respect and support others. Our character development program puts a label on the activities, gives us ideas and continuity for unity at the school. I've always been an advocate for character development."*

At the elementary level, teachers mentioned teaching character education through literature, music, current events, social studies, mini-plays, service projects, role-playing, and quotes. At the secondary level teachers focused on character through journal writing, current events, service-learning, and extracurricular activities. For example a secondary teacher said, *"I do a unit on teaching morals in my child development class. We identify values they think are important and discuss ways to teach them."* A secondary math teacher and coach said, *"I teach my baseball players that winning isn't everything. I try to convince my students that grades aren't what are <u>most</u> important. I try to teach students that their <u>character</u> is what is really important. I recently developed a sportsmanship program for our school. I hope to promote the positives of extracurricular athletics while minimizing the negatives."*

Secondary teachers were especially cognizant of the importance of providing historical role models for students. One secondary teacher said, *"I believe I have become more aware of the relationships between past and present and their interrelatedness and applications to the student in today's world. Great men and women of the past were great because of their contribution and example. I believe there is a need to challenge the students to apply these examples to today's circumstances and make the world better because of them."*

<u>Use of Character Building Strategies</u>. In addition to teaching character education as part of the curriculum, teachers also reported addressing character development through strategies such as cooperative learning, class meetings, opportunities for student leadership, positive discipline plans, and the use of "teachable moments" to discuss values. Cooperative learning was a strategy used by both elementary and secondary teachers. An elementary teacher said, *"I taught cooperative learning skills and allocated more time for cooperative learning activities."* Another elementary teacher said, *"I find cooperative learning has been an excellent model for my classes. I don't do everything but I try to get lots of student interaction, coming to consensus, and finding ways to work together cohesively."* A middle school science teacher said, *"I do group work at least once a week to help them develop better leadership and social skills. I gear my homework requirements and grading*

scales toward the values of responsibility, integrity, and work ethic. I have tried to instill a sense of community in my students. I want them to realize that the success or failure of one person will have effects on the community as a whole and have them work together for the success of everyone."

At the elementary level, teachers used variations of class meetings to provide opportunities for student input, to teach values, and to help students solve conflicts. For example, one teacher said, *"I hold a community circle everyday to give every child a voice. We solve problems, share successes, and get to know each other better."* Another elementary teacher said, *"I try to have each of my students become a leader of the class. By doing this my children respect each other more."* A few teachers felt it was important to provide more choices for students and greater opportunities for input about class rules. For example a secondary teacher said, *"I allow my students to guide the topics of class discussions more often and I become their mediator."* An elementary teacher said, *"I try to let the students be involved in the decisions and activities of the class."*

In addition to planned curriculum and character-building strategies teachers also made use of situations that occurred spontaneously in the classroom to discuss values. Typical of the use of teachable moments was this comment by an elementary teacher, *"When a problem arises I ask the student if they are following the Community of Caring values—it gets them thinking and helps them relate the values to real-life problems."* In a similar vein, a secondary teacher said, *"I am much more conscious of teaching moments where I can tie values into the text we are reading, events in the classroom or media, and class activities."*

Being a Good Role Model. As part of the focus on values, teachers remarked that they are very conscious of being good role models for students. One elementary teacher said, *"I try to model good character traits so students will learn from my behavior."* Another said, *"I have always felt the values taught in character education are important. I have tried to live them throughout my life and be an example to my own children and others."* A third elementary teacher commented, *"I look more closely at the things I do in comparison with the rules we give students to follow."* A secondary teacher remarked, *"I have found that I have reduced the amount of negative talk about students or people that have different cultures."*

In addition to being good role models, teachers tried to promote positive relationships with students. One elementary teacher said, "*I probably spend more time building a positive relationship with my students as result of my involvement in character education, even though I have always felt it was important."* Another teacher indicated s/he was more aware of student interaction and tried to "*make all students feel that they are dealt with fairly."* Finally, a teacher said, *"I try to remember a saying I heard long ago—'Children don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' That means 'caring' precedes 'learning.' I am absolutely sold on character education in the classroom."*

Fostering Positive Student Behavior. Teachers also felt it was important to focus on student interactions in addition to being a good role model. Some teachers mentioned the way in which they handled discipline as their most significant change. For example one teacher said, *"I do a lot to help children resolve their own conflicts rather than solving them for them."* Another said she tries to help *"students peacefully resolve conflicts on their own"* while a third teacher said s/he focuses *"more on feelings and how to handle them properly."* Some teachers mentioned the importance of defining and rewarding appropriate behavior. One elementary teacher said, *"I tell the students what is happening. I label the behavior. 'That's trouble' or 'That's being honest'"* while another said, *"I use a "management plan that recognizes and rewards students who display good character at school."* Teachers also insisted that students treat each other respectfully. One teacher said, *"I try to stress to every class and every kid I associate with that all humans deserve kindness and respect. It is an*

underlying rule in my room." Another said, *"I try very hard to help my students get along with each other."*

Although the Implementation Survey utilized teacher self-reported behavior that was not verified by observations, the results suggest that the majority of teachers are engaging, at least some of the time, in effective strategies for promoting the character development of students. This is an important indication of how thoroughly character development has been integrated into the curriculum and become a part of the school culture. The importance of integrating character education throughout the entire school culture was one of the organizing principles of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development and is recognized by many others as the only way to make a lasting change in schools. Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director of the Character Education Partnership (CEP), said in the Summer 1999 issue of the newsletter Character Educator, *"Good character development does not come from the occasional assembly or brief homeroom recitations on values. It comes from infusing character education into regular academic class work, reinforcing values in extracurricular activities, and creating school cultures where values are modeled and practiced by adults and students alike every day."*

Summary of Impact on Educators

The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development legitimized the teaching of values and created awareness among educators of the importance of character education. As teachers' awareness of the importance and legitimacy of teaching values increased, the extent of their involvement in character education activities increased as well. Both elementary and secondary teachers reported statistically significant increases in their involvement in character development efforts during the 1997-98 school year. The grant made important contributions to professional development, as well, by providing support for educators to read professional literature, attend conferences and workshops, collaboratively develop curriculum, and present inservice to colleagues. It also contributed to the incorporation of many effective teaching strategies by both elementary and secondary teachers. The majority of randomly selected teachers reported that they consciously focus on character development and integrate values throughout their curriculum. They also reported using many strategies, such as cooperative learning, class meetings, and conflict resolution, supported by research as effective in promoting character development. In addition to fostering positive relationships among students, 99% of teachers said they consciously try to model good character in all of their interactions with students.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Five sources of data were used to collect information about the impact of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development on students. The Student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts provided information about students' cognitive understanding of the values being stressed by schools. The Character Development Survey provided a measure of whether school expectations regarding behavior were being effectively communicated to students. The Character Development Survey also provided information about the qualities of kindness and caring, respect and responsibility and fairness and honesty demonstrated by both students and adults. This information will be discussed in the next section on School Climate. The Site Facilitator Survey and the Character Education Progress Reports provided important anecdotal evidence of the impact of the grant on students, while an analysis of student discipline statistics substantiated improvement in student discipline at many schools. An analysis of these multiple sources of data indicated that the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development positively affected students in three major ways:

1. Contributed to a cognitive understanding of values,
2. Created an awareness of appropriate student behavior, and
3. Improved student attitudes and behavior.

Contributed to Cognitive Understanding of Values

Lickona (1991) indicated in his book, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility,* that there are three important areas in character development—moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior. To measure students' cognitive knowledge of moral behavior, they were asked to provide written definitions and examples of the values being taught by their schools. Schools focused on a combined total of 36 values (acceptance, action, caring, citizenship, cleanliness, commitment, common sense, community, compassion, cooperation, curiosity, effort, excellence, fairness, family, flexibility, friendship, helpfulness, honesty, humor, integrity, initiative, knowledge/literacy, moral courage, organization, patience, perseverance, positive attitude, problem solving, respect, responsibility, service, tolerance, trustworthiness/trust, truthfulness, and valuing diversity), with four values (caring, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness) most frequently selected.

After one year of exposure to character education through grant-sponsored activities (January 1996 to December 1997), 62% of students in randomly selected classes in grades 5, 8, and 11, correctly defined and gave an example of their school's values. These results represented 22 out of the 32 schools (69%) from the four school districts that participated in the grant during the first year. It should be noted that at least one school had not yet focused on all of their values at the time of administration of the survey, which would result in fewer students providing correct definitions. The instrument was later revised so that schools indicated which values had been taught at the time of survey administration.

The survey was administered again to randomly selected classes of students in the spring of the 1997-98 school year. Eighteen of the 31 schools (58%) participating during the third year of the grant returned student surveys. Of these 18 schools, 10 were participating in grant activities for the second year and 8 were new to the grant. Eighty percent of these students correctly defined the values being focused on by their schools.

In addition to the results of this survey, anecdotal evidence provided by schools on Site Facilitator Surveys indicated students' increasing awareness of values. One school stated, *"Throughout the*

course of the year students, staff, and community are gaining a clearer understanding of values education and its impact on all parts of society. Students are slowly beginning to understand the significance in respecting all people and sharing a common knowledge of the universal values of society." Another school commented, *"I hear students and teachers using the kind of language that promotes character in the school, and I've observed better problem solving and conflict resolution."*

Created Awareness of Appropriate Behavior

Students were asked to indicate on the Character Development Survey whether school expectations were clear regarding appropriate behavior such as being kind, treating each other fairly, obeying rules and telling the truth. Both elementary and secondary students believed that these expectations were evident almost all of the time. Using a five-point scale with 1 meaning "hardly ever" and 5 meaning "almost always" the mean elementary rating on the pre survey was 4.68 and on the post survey was 4.73. The average secondary rating was 4.45 on the pre survey and 4.55 on the post survey. While both elementary and secondary ratings increased during the 1997-98 school year, the increase was not statistically significant. This is most likely due to the fact that the ratings were so high initially.

Improved Student Attitudes and Behavior

One hundred Site Facilitator Surveys were received from the 67 schools that participated in the grant between 1996 and 1999 for a response rate of 75%. (Each school was expected to complete a Site Facilitator Survey for each of their two years of participation). Of the 100 schools that completed surveys, 46 schools or 73% indicated that students' attitudes and behavior had improved as a result of their character development initiatives. Both elementary and secondary schools noted the improvements. Schools reported a decrease in discipline referrals, fewer student fights and confrontations, decreased vandalism, fewer tardies, and an increase in positive behaviors such as interacting more kindly and respectfully with students and teachers, better attendance, improved achievement, and greater student involvement in extracurricular activities. For example, one school said, *"There has been a noticeable school-wide decrease in acts of vandalism and fighting, along with an increase in demonstrations of honesty and good citizenship."*

Several factors should be kept in mind when interpreting these results. First, schools were asked to provide written answers on a survey regarding the effects of character building activities. Although possible categories were suggested (such as student behavior, attendance, student participation in extracurricular activities, etc.), schools were not required to provide responses in each category. Therefore, their answers most likely reflect highly apparent changes in their schools. Second, the survey was administered after schools had been involved in the grant from one to two school years—not a long period of time. Third, the absence of a response in a particular category does not necessarily indicate that no change occurred in that area. Schools may have overlooked the question. Or since some schools had already been implementing character education for several years, student behavior in these schools may already have been quite good and would not reflect an additional improvement.
To illustrate the type of changes noted in schools, written comments from the site facilitator surveys are presented below.

Student Discipline. One school commented, *"It is hard to measure the percentage of improvement but we have gone from daily discipline problems to once or twice a week. Today we had our VIP awards assembly. We have never dared have one assembly because of the number of students we have. We wanted all of the students to see our VIP of the Year and our Principal's Award presented to the six students that were chosen. Today, we braved it and had one assembly with all 650*

students. It was all the proof we needed. It was great to have 650 students come quietly into the assembly and sit for one hour. They were respectful, courteous, and very well behaved." Another school said, *"In the past our school has been featured in the newspaper with articles on violence where deadly weapons have been used. This year we did not have one incident of weapons used or serious damage as a result of fights."* A third school felt their focus on character development was "*evidenced in the way that students attempt to solve interpersonal problems with peers. They are learning to define problems, get the facts, and treat one another with tolerance and respect as they work through the steps of problem solving. Teachers are taking the time to use conflicts as teaching moments, not just as a reason to impose punishment."*

A teacher at a middle school felt that one student's involvement in character education projects had totally turned his life around. She noted at the beginning of the year the student dressed in Gothic clothing, had multiple body piercings, and wore clothing and styles designed to shock others. He seemed to have no friends, didn't trust adults, and was failing every class. By the end of the school year, the student was named Team Captain by classmates for a fundraising activity that involved team running. He demonstrated unusual responsibility and commitment by remaining awake for 24 hours to notify team members when it was their turn to run and by running for them (as long as two consecutive hours) when they were too tired. In five of his seven classes he improved his grades to a C average. The teacher reported that he now has very positive interactions with students—*"They view him as a hero. He is considered as a very responsible, on-task, good citizen in my class. He will now hang around my classroom and after school just to talk about life or make-up an assignment. He views me as an adult he can trust who will fight for him and help him. I know he has had very few adults he has ever trusted in his life."* The teacher concluded, *"The grant has given me the opportunity to make a huge difference in the lives of these children. I am very thankful I was able to give them these experiences that they will never forget, and which they will be able to build upon for the rest of their lives."*

Prosocial Behaviors. A teacher commented, *"From my own personal experience within our classroom, the 1996-97 year the character education program led to the most caring students I have ever had. Making the quilt for the homeless shelter brought a feeling of kindness and giving to our room. Even the 'cool' boys couldn't wait to get their turn to sew on our quilt."* A mother of a second grader asked her son how the students in his class were treating their new substitute teacher. His reply was, *"We're a Community of Caring school. We treat everyone nice."* One school said, *"We have far fewer fights and many more friendship circles forming. We have also had a better response to the handicapped and the special education students."*

A particularly poignant example of students' incorporation of values into their behavior was provided in a school newsletter article. A varsity basketball game was scheduled and the principal said, *"As often happens, the student councils from both schools planned a dinner before the game. (Child's name) came in and told us of the plans, but said he was leaving early 'to visit one of our best buddies in the hospital.' A Downs syndrome boy was up at LDS Hospital to have another heart surgery and to have the batteries in his pacemaker replaced. The student council was leaving early so they could visit their buddy in the hospital before the big game. Student body officers took time out of their busy schedules and away from their all-important social life.to visit a friend. They didn't need to visit him. They didn't have an assignment to visit him. They just wanted to. Imagine how much that visit meant to the young patient. That is what caring and compassion are all about."*

Other Behaviors. A few schools reported effects on attendance including a decrease in tardies. An elementary school said they had experienced a *"decrease in student absences—our attendance record is up 5-10% and tardies are at an all time low."* Another school reported that on the day of the week they offered multi-age groups to discuss values, tardies decreased which *"was*

seen as a positive feeling about the activity by the students." Two schools reported effects on achievement that they attributed to their emphasis on character development. One elementary school noted that student achievement had improved as a result of the student education plan process that emphasized skills such as "cooperative group participant" and "contributor to the community." Another elementary school reported academic success as a result of the school's use of friendship groups (part of their character education strategies). They said, *"One success story has been in the buddy system. One 3rd grade student was a non-reader at the first of the year. His buddy has taken time to work during recess and during other free time. The third grader is now reading on a second grade level. He loves reading and his entire attitude about school has changed."*

Statistical Evidence of Changes in Student Behavior

In an attempt to provide "hard data" to substantiate changes in student discipline, schools were asked during the last two years of the grant to provide student discipline statistics. This proved to be somewhat challenging as there did not seem to be one source of data that was collected and reported across all schools and school districts. In some cases this type of information was available only on individual student records and would have required a massive effort to compile. In other cases, no baseline data were available, but in response to evaluation requirements, schools began compiling this information. In conversations with other evaluators, this continues to be a challenge for most character education projects. Twenty of the 33 schools (or 61%) participating in the last two years of the grant reported some form of student discipline data. Of the 20 schools, two reported baseline data, three reported an increase in negative behavior, and 15 reported decreases in negative student behavior. Of these 15, thirteen provided data or analyzed data to provide the statistics and two provided principal observations of decreases. Table 6 summarizes this data.

Summary of Impact on Students

Students in schools that participated in the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development were aware of their school's expectations for positive behavior and were able to define the values being emphasized in their schools. A combination of anecdotal and statistical information indicates that the grant positively affected student behavior. Schools reported an increase in positive behaviors such as interacting more kindly and respectfully with students and teachers, and a decrease in negative behaviors such as fighting, vandalism, discipline referrals, and suspensions. While researchers (Laud & Berkowitz, 1999; Lickona, 1991) suggest that several years must elapse before we can sufficiently judge the impact of character education programs on students' long-term character development, the evaluation suggests that character education efforts in Utah are having a positive effect on student behavior in school.

TABLE 6.
Student Discipline Statistics

DISTRICT	LEVEL	TYPE OF DATA	CHANGE
Salt Lake	Elementary	White Slips (discipline referrals)	**Decrease of 45%** (172 to 94)
Salt Lake	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 75%** (4 to 1)
Salt Lake	Elementary	Discipline Referrals	**Baseline**
Salt Lake	Secondary	Student Pregnancies	**Decrease of 100%** (3 to 0)
Granite	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 50%** (30 to 15)
Granite	Elementary	Referrals to Alternative Classroom	**Decrease of 51%** (1,344 to 654)
Granite	Elementary	Safe School Violations	**Increase*** (1 to 6)
Granite	Elementary/ Secondary	Dishonest Behavior	**Decrease of 50%** (4 to 2)
Granite	Secondary	Conduct Code Violations	**Increase**** (233 to 491)
Alpine	Elementary	Referrals to Principal	**Increase***** (135 to 201)
Alpine	Elementary	Tardies	**Decrease of 90%** (187 to 19)
		Fighting	**Decrease of 93%** (113 to 8)
Alpine	Elementary	Fighting	**Decrease of 62%** (29 to 11)
		Suspensions	**Decrease of 100%** (2 to 0)
Alpine	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 67%** (15 to 5) (secretary observations)
Alpine	Secondary	Suspensions	**Baseline**
		# on Honor Role	
Alpine	Secondary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 47%** (158 to 84) but also noted population decrease
Washington	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 57%** (7 to 3)
Washington	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease of 15%** (no figures given)
Washington	Elementary	Pink slips (discipline referrals)	**Decrease of 50%** (principal observations, no figures given)
Washington	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease** (principal observations,
		Referrals to office	no figures given)
Washington	Elementary	Suspensions	**Decrease** (data analysis at
		Referrals	school)

*This school experienced increased enrollment, but didn't think that accounted for the increase.
**This school had increasing enrollments, change in administration, and a change in discipline focus.
***This school believed they were now more aware of negative behavior. They also reported an unusually difficult group of students transferring into the school.

IMPACT ON SCHOOL CLIMATE

Several sources of data provided information about the impact of the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development on school climate—the Character Development Survey administered to staff, students, and parents, the Site Facilitator surveys completed by more than 70% of schools that participated in the grant, and the Character Education Progress Reports completed by 39% of the schools that were no longer participating during the 1998-99 school year. School climate is notoriously difficult to measure yet is vital to the promotion of good character. Leming (1993) stated in an article on character education evaluation, *"Character develops within a social web or environment. The nature of that environment, the messages it sends to individuals, and the behaviors it encourages or discourages are important factors to consider in character education."* However, Laud and Berkowitz (1999) caution that it is not easy to define desired outcomes and that the *"true richness of character education effects may be lost in the search for simple conceptions of outcome variables"* (p. 69). The evidence regarding the impact of the grant on school climate was mixed. While anecdotal information supported important changes in school climate, these were not always verified by statistical results.

Many schools noted an improvement in school climate including improved collegiality and communication among staff members, more positive relationships between students and staff, better relationships with parents and increased parental involvement. Some schools remarked on a general improvement in school climate such as *"mutual good will and a sense of community"* or *"a more positive school climate."* One school commented, *"The entire climate at the school has changed. Everyone seems happier! Especially the teachers and staff. You can see attitudes changing everyday. A more positive and upbeat atmosphere prevails here at the school."* Another school said, *"There is a much more inclusive environment within the school. Everyone in the school is valued for their uniqueness and the contributions they make. The parent/staff relations are positive and every classroom has at least one volunteer every day."* An elementary school noted, *"Our school climate has definitely warmed up since the staff received Covey training. Relationships have improved as the teachers use Covey concepts to build themselves and their classrooms. It takes time for teachers and students to believe in and take hold of any new programs, but I believe our school is really beginning to buy into the values program and trust that it will be an ongoing thing."* One school indicated that even the neighborhood perceptions of their school had changed for the positive.

<u>Improved Staff Relationships</u>

Schools noted an improvement in staff relationships. For example one school said, *"There has been a marked improvement in our school relationships especially our staff-to-staff relationships. For the most part, each staff member has tried hard to be more caring and considerate of each other. There has been greater unity in all that we have done."* Another school said, *"We have also found a positive change in teachers cooperating with one another and communicating more regarding character education."* One site facilitator commented, *"Staff relations are better this year since we are cooperating in planning, arranging, and working on monthly assemblies and curriculum projects. Just working together on curriculum issues related to different classes has opened up a dialog between teachers and administration. This has been real positive."* A high school commented, *"Collegiality has improved among teachers and staff."* Another elementary school noted, *"Faculty meetings were more congenial and efficient. There were numerous collaborative activities between teachers and grade levels during the year."*

But perhaps the most powerful example of the positive effects on staff relationships through involvement in character education was made evident in this comment by an elementary school. *"All*

of our staff and support staff went to Park City in the fall of 1996, where we received two full days of Tribes training. We had a great time together. We laughed, sang, and shared with one another. We created a strong bond that we have continued to build on. Most of our staff members have worked together for many years, yet we were never really that close. Through the Tribes process we were able to bond like never before. We took this change back into our classrooms that fall. It was a great year."

An analysis of the Staff Relationships subscale on the Character Development Survey showed mixed results. Elementary teachers rated staff relationships positively on the pre survey with a slight increase on the post survey that was not statistically significant. However, at the secondary level, there was a statistically significant decline in staff relationships ($t=-2.83$, $p \leq .005$). It is not apparent what caused this perceived decline.

Improved Relationships with Parents

Several schools reported on Site Facilitator Surveys and Character Education Progress reports that their character development initiatives had contributed to more positive relationships with parents and resulted in greater family involvement in the schools, especially in character building activities. For example one school said, *"Relations between the school and parents have also improved. Parents are happy that their children are learning to do things for others and want to participate with their children in the activities that are sponsored by the school."* Another school noted, *"Because support staff, aides and parent volunteers were used to conduct groups, the character education reached more than just the students. It helped create more school unity. It also increased parental involvement at our school. Some parents became very involved at home with the home involvement activities."* A school summarized the effects of their participation in the grant in this way, *"The areas that I see the most change directly because of our character education program is in parent and community involvement. It seems that we have had more cooperation and support this year than in many years past."* Several schools indicated that family activities sponsored through character education initiatives such as multicultural events and values assemblies were very well attended.

Although both parents and staff at elementary and secondary schools indicated slight positive increases in parent staff relationships on the Character Development Survey, the results were not statistically significant. Several explanations are possible. First, the sampling method of using the parents of randomly selected intact classes of students may not be representative of all parents. Second, since relationships were fairly positive to begin with they might not be expected to change significantly. Third, one year is most likely an inadequate amount of time to significantly alter parent-staff relationships especially since the predominant focus of character education projects, at least initially, is students. See Statistical Appendix for additional information.

Elementary and secondary schools also reported moderate levels of parent involvement both pre and post on the Character Development Survey with no significant change during the 1997-98 school year. According to standards for parent involvement developed by the National PTA (2000), parent involvement is multi-faceted and is affected by many factors. While several schools provided anecdotal evidence of increased parent and family involvement, significant change in this area across all schools probably requires a much broader and more intense focus over several years' time.

Improved Relationships Between Staff and Students

Schools commented on a positive change in relationships between teachers and students. One school that used mixed grade level groups explained it in this way, *"One of the most positive effects was on*

teacher-studcnt and teacher-teacher relationships. By having a cross grouping of students, teachers were able to get to know more students in the school and were then able to address students by their names and know more about them personally. This helped create a greater school-wide concern and caring. Teachers had more empathy for each other in dealing with 'hard' students. They could help each other out by sharing ideas of what had worked with them and the student. The values lessons were something common to all grades and teachers and there was an opportunity for teacher sharing. This helped with teacher morale at the school." Another school's site facilitator said, *"I feel the relationship between teachers and students is better because the kindness and respect level has greatly increased among those students where character education is incorporated."* An elementary school remarked, "*Our student-staff relationships are better. The teachers have been respected more, but I think it is because they are respecting the students more. Speaking for my own class, I have seen a world of difference the past two years. I have had the same students and they are like night and day!"*

Statistical Evidence of Changes in School Climate

The Character Development Survey was designed to measure changes in school climate primarily in the areas of kindness and caring, respect and responsibility, and fairness and honesty. Because each of these three subscales included items that referred both to students and to adults at the school, the results will be discussed in this section, rather than in the student section. It should be kept in mind, however, that most of the items in each of these subscales referred to students and therefore are another indication of the impact of the grant on student behavior. See Statistical Appendix for information about the content of the subscales.

There was a statistically significant improvement as perceived by elementary staff in the overall school climate ($t=2.91$, $p \leq .004$), in kindness and caring ($t=3.06$, $p \leq .002$), respect and responsibility ($t=3.25$, $p \leq .001$), and fairness and honesty ($t=2.80$, $p \leq .005$). Elementary parents and students' ratings of school climate did not change significantly. There were no significant changes at the secondary level for any of the three groups.

The lack of significance at the secondary level is not surprising given the difficulty noted by educators in implementing character education in larger, more departmentalized schools. In addition to this difficulty, Laud and Berkowitz (1999) point out that determining whether character education programs have been fully implemented is difficult at any level. It may well be that character education programs were not sufficiently implemented at the secondary level after one school year for there to be any change. The lack of significance in parent ratings of changes in student behavior also is not particularly surprising. Both elementary and secondary parents, but especially parents of secondary students, are not as intimately involved in the schools as are students and teachers, and therefore may not be in a position to accurately judge student behavior.

However, the difference in teacher and student perspective at the elementary level is an interesting conundrum. One possible explanation is that teachers have a great deal invested in the outcome of the character education efforts and possibly see things in a "rosier" light. This discrepancy is not necessarily bad, since it is well supported by research that positive teacher expectations lead to positive changes in students. Another explanation is that awareness of change in school climate first begins with teachers and later extends to students. A third explanation is the possibility that one randomly selected intact class of students at each school is insufficient to detect change. A fourth possibility is that one school year is an inadequate length of time to significantly alter student behavior. Laud and Berkowitz (1999) remark on the importance of delayed post-testing to truly evaluate the effects on student development. Lickona (1991) also notes a "sleeper effect" in which the

effects of a character education program may not appear until years after the program has been implemented. Regardless of the explanation, the anecdotal data and the statistical data suggest modest positive changes in school climate, especially in kindness and caring, respect and responsibility and fairness and honesty demonstrated at the elementary level.

Summary of Impact on School Climate

Anecdotal evidence provided very strong support for the positive impact of character education on school climate, especially at the elementary level. Schools felt that communication had improved, staff relationships had became more congenial, and that teachers were collaborating more frequently and effectively on instructional activities. They also reported that parents and families were more involved—especially in character education activities and events, and that behavior had become more caring, respectful, and honest, particularly in elementary schools. Not all of these changes were verified by statistical data and several possible explanations were discussed. More thorough implementation of character education over a longer time frame is probably necessary to significantly alter school climate.

EPILOGUE

The Utah Community Partnership for Character Development expanded Utah's historical commitment to character education by: 1) supporting the development of a highly successful model for implementing community-based character education; 2) providing ongoing professional development opportunities for educators; 3) facilitating collaborative relationships among the USOE, local school districts, universities, and state and national organizations; and 4) providing the impetus to further integrate character education into state education documents and institutions.

Community-Based Character Development Model

The community-based character education model has become an established part of character education in Utah and is presented annually at the Community Conference through the use of state staff development funds. Each year 150-200 educators representing schools and school districts throughout Utah attend this conference which offers a myriad of topics for new and experienced educators including: how to successfully involve communities in character initiatives, how to use a community consensus approach to selecting values, how to integrate values throughout the curriculum and the school culture, and how to evaluate character education programs. The conference typically highlights creative ideas developed by Utah schools, thereby providing educators with the opportunity to make presentations to colleagues. Conference participants also are exposed to a wide variety of materials and resources that can be successfully integrated into existing curriculum and school programs.

Professional Development Opportunities

In addition to the Community Conference, a variety of other professional development opportunities also are offered each year such as the Annual Character Education Youth Conference and Action Research workshops. At the October, 1999 Community Conference, educators participated in an introduction to Action Research and were invited to send a school team to three additional workshops. Twenty-seven educators representing 19 schools, nine school districts, and the USOE participated in the Action Research series during the 1999-2000 school year. Teachers, administrators, counselors, and district coordinators identified research topics related to character education and learned how to conduct interviews, develop surveys, collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, prepare a report or presentation, and use the action research results to modify their character education initiatives.

Participants indicated that action research changed their perceptions of research and teaching, provided a useful tool for improving character education initiatives, improved communication in the schools, and contributed to their professional development. They appreciated the opportunity to discuss education with their colleagues and to reflect on their practice. Not only did they believe participating in action research had contributed to their professional growth as educators, they also felt empowered and experienced a renewed enthusiasm for teaching and administration (Johns, 2000). The USOE published a booklet describing the Action Research projects and their results.

As part of the USOE's continuing commitment to character education and professional development, a second series of Action Research workshops will be held in southern Utah during the 2000-01 school year. Educators from the first series will be co-presenters and will meet periodically for additional professional development and to support one another as they continue to engage in action research in their schools.

Collaborative Efforts

The USOE, local school districts, universities, and state and national groups regularly collaborate in offering professional development opportunities in Utah that encompass character education. Experienced school districts, often those who participated in the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development grant, mentor new districts as they implement character education. In June of 1999, the USOE and the Utah Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development collaboratively offered a character education conference that attracted more than 420 Utah educators, with an additional 70 educators making presentations. Salt Lake School District and Granite School District jointly sponsored a Community of Caring conference during the 1998-99 school year that was attended by more than 400 educators from those two districts. During this past summer, the Character Education Specialist and the Social Studies specialist from the USOE collaborated with state archeologists on a Character and Ethics in Archaeology Workshop held at the University of Utah Museum of Natural History. Also during the summer of 2000, the National Community of Caring Conference was held in Utah, in large part because of the active involvement of local school districts in the Community of Caring approach to character development. In October of 2000, more than 185 educators attended this year's Community Conference. Expertise in Utah has developed to such an extent that this entire conference was planned and presented by local educators.

Integration of Character Education

Character education has been integrated into many other state initiatives such as prevention programs, service-learning, social studies, Utah's 3 Rs, and the Utah Teachers' Academy. Character education is embedded in the Utah core curriculum, is part of the State Board of Education's Mission Statement and is included in preservice teaching standards for university teacher preparation programs. In the last five years, the initial hesitancy of many educators and community members towards the teaching of character education in the schools, has been replaced by a dedicated commitment to, as Kevin Ryan says, "the twin goals of education: the academic and character development" of our future citizens.

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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Description of the Instrument

The Character Development Survey for all groups contained a common core of 26 items measuring kindness/caring, respect/responsibility, fairness/honesty, and school expectations. The parent survey contained an additional 11 items measuring parent involvement and parent-staff relationships. The faculty survey contained corollary items on these topics and an additional nine items measuring staff relationships and involvement in character development activities. The student survey used a three point Likert-type scale with response choices of "almost always," "sometimes," and "hardly ever," while the parent and staff surveys utilized a five-point response code. The student scale was recoded during data analysis to be equivalent to the parent and staff scales.

Sampling

The Character Development Survey was administered several times during the grant to school staff members, students, and parents. The 1997-98 school year was selected for statistical analysis because pre and post data were available for the greatest number of schools during this year. The CDS was administered to all teachers plus up to ten other staff members including all administrators and additional support staff selected by the schools. The CDS was also administered to one randomly selected intact class at a specified grade level at each elementary, middle and high school, and to the parents of these students.

Response Rate

Twenty-four schools (17 elementary and 7 secondary) completed both pre and post surveys during the 1997-98 school year. This represented 71% of the 34 schools and four of the five school districts that participated in the grant that year, with proportionately equal representations of elementary and secondary schools. Completed surveys were received from 593 teachers (416 elementary and 177 secondary), 431 parents (327 elementary and 104 secondary), and 504 students (352 elementary and 152 secondary).

Reliability of Instrument

Reliability statistics were calculated for the overall instrument and for each of the subscales using the 1997-98 data for staff, students, and parents. The reliability estimate is an indicator of the instrument's stability, meaning that if an instrument is reliable, repeated administrations with the same or similar groups of people should provide consistent results. A reliability coefficient of .70 or above is desirable to consider an instrument a reliable measure. Both an unstandarized Cronbach's alpha and a standardized item alpha were calculated. The standardized item alpha is reported in Table 1. The overall reliability of the Character Development Survey for the three groups was quite high, ranging between .88 and .95, while the reliability of the subscales ranged from a low of .70 to a high of .95. See Table 1.

TABLE 1.
Reliability of CDS and Subscales

SCALE	STAFF	PARENTS	STUDENTS
Overall	.95	.95	.88
Kindness & Caring	.80	.81	.70
Respect & Responsibility	.82	.84	.73
Fairness & Honesty	.78	.80	.70
School Expectations	.92	.92	.82
Parent-Staff Relationships	.89	.91	N/A
Parent Involvement	.82	.70	N/A
Staff Relationships	.92	N/A	N/A

Statistical Analysis of Subscales

Because of the inherent differences in elementary and secondary schools, the data for each of these groups were analyzed separately. Means were calculated for each group on the overall instrument and for each subscale. Multiple t-tests were used to compare pre and post test scores and the alpha levels were adjusted according to the number of subscales. For example, 10 t-tests were conducted on the staff data, so the customary alpha level of .05 was divided by 10 resulting in an adjusted alpha of .005. The following sections describe each of the subscales and present the results of the statistical analysis.

Kindness and Caring

The kindness and caring subscale consisted of seven items that measured how nicely students treated each other at school and how kindly adults treated students. See Figure 1.

Figure 1.
Kindness and Caring

1. The students at this school are nice to each other.
2. The students at this school try to include everyone.
3. The students at this school are only nice to their friends.
4. The students at this school make fun of students who are different.
5. The students at this school try to make new students feel welcome.
6. The adults at this school let students know they care about them.
7. The adults at this school are kind to the students.

According to elementary staff, there was a significant improvement in the demonstration of kindness and caring during the 1997-98 school year ($t=3.06$, $p \leq .002$). Results were not significant for elementary students and their parents, or for any of the three groups at the secondary level. See Table 2.

TABLE 2
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Kindness and Caring

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	416	492	3.88	3.99	3.06	906	.002*
Students	352	352	3.82	3.82	.03	702	.978
Parents	324	257	3.77	3.86	1.84	579	.066
Secondary							
Staff	217	201	3.43	3.42	-.193	416	.847
Students	170	87	3.25	3.26	.048	255	.962
Parents	116	46	3.34	3.23	-.780	160	.436

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

Respect and Responsibility

The respect and responsibility subscale consisted of seven items that measured students' respect for school property and for their peers, as well as whether adults modeled respectful behavior for students. See Figure2.

Figure 2.
Respect and Responsibility

8. The students at this school get along well together even if they are different.
9. The students at this school insult or hit each other.
10. The students at this school can work out problems without insults or fighting.
11. The students at this school respect school property.
12. The students at this school write graffiti or vandalize school property.
13. The students at this school take responsibility for their actions.
14. The adults at this school talk politely to students.

Elementary staff members noted a significant improvement in respect and responsibility at their schools ($t=3.25$, $p \leq .001$), although again, this was not noted by elementary students or parents, nor was there a statistically significant change in secondary schools. See Table 3.

TABLE 3.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Respect and Responsibility

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	416	492	3.74	3.87	3.25	906	.001*
Students	352	349	3.78	3.74	-.67	699	.505
Parents	324	257	3.89	3.97	1.43	579	.153
Secondary							
Staff	217	200	3.35	3.27	-1.36	415	.175
Students	166	86	3.20	3.02	-1.66	250	.099
Parents	113	46	3.54	3.31	-1.68	157	.096

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

Fairness and Honesty

The fairness and honesty subscale consisted of seven items that measured perceptions regarding involvement of students in determining rules, the fairness of school rules and whether students adhered to them, truthfulness and honesty of students, and whether adults treated students fairly. See Figure 3.

Figure 3.
Fairness and Honesty

15. The students at this school play fairly.
16. The students at this school tell the truth.
17. The students at this school lie or cheat on their homework.
18. The students at this school help decide on class rules.
19. The rules in our school are fair.
20. The students at this school follow the rules.
21. The adults at this school treat students fairly.

Elementary staff members indicated a positive change in perceptions of fairness and honesty ($t=2.80$, $p \leq .005$) at their schools. There was no significant change in elementary student and parent ratings, or secondary staff, parent, or student ratings of fairness and honesty. See Table 4.

TABLE 4.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Fairness and Honesty

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			(2-tailed)
Elementary							
Staff	414	492	4.00	4.09	2.80	904	.005*
Students	352	349	3.70	3.70	-.01	699	.992
Parents	322	236	3.97	4.04	1.28	556	.201
Secondary							
Staff	217	200	3.57	3.48	-2.12	415	.035
Students	164	85	3.03	3.07	.39	247	.699
Parents	115	32	3.46	3.54	.56	145	.574

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

School Expectations

The school expectations subscale consisted of five items that measured perceptions of school expectations, i.e. whether students, staff, and parents believed the school expected everyone to get along, be kind and caring, treat each other fairly, obey the rules, and tell the truth. In an attempt to design the most powerful evaluation (reference) this subscale was included so it could be determined that even if there were no significant changes in behavior, it would at least be clear whether or not schools were effectively communicating their intentions about good character. See Figure 4.

Figure 4.
School Expectations

22. Our school expects everyone to get along even if they are different.
23. Our school expects everyone to be kind and caring.
24. Our school expects everyone to treat each other fairly.
25. Our school expects everyone to obey the rules.
26. Our school expects everyone to tell the truth.

There were no significant changes in school expectations for any group at any level. This is probably because even on the pretest students, parents, and staff reported high levels of positive expectations. See Table 5.

TABLE 5.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
School Expectations

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	406	487	4.84	4.86	.68	891	.498
Students	352	349	4.68	4.73	1.04	699	.300
Parents	322	255	4.77	4.78	.37	575	.714
Secondary							
Staff	214	194	4.59	4.47	-1.82	406	.069
Students	162	85	4.45	4.55	.81	245	.418
Parents	119	46	4.55	4.48	-.67	163	.506

Parent-Staff Relationships

The parent-staff relationships subscale consisted of seven items measuring parent and staff perceptions of how effectively schools communicated with parents; whether parents were treated with respect and whether the schools valued parents' ideas and encouraged parent involvement. See Figure 5.

Figure 5.
Parent-Staff Relationships

27. The school staff cares about the students' families.
28. The school staff treats parents with respect.
29. The school staff makes parents feel welcome at school.
30. The school staff values parents' ideas and input.
31. The school staff encourages parents to be involved at school.
32. The school communicates effectively with parents.
33. The school staff tells parents about character development efforts.

There were no significant changes in this subscale during the 1997-98 school year. See Table 6.

TABLE 6.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Parent-Staff Relationships

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	406	487	4.42	4.51	2.53	891	.012
Parents	325	238	4.27	4.42	2.28	561	.023
Secondary							
Staff	214	194	3.97	4.00	.48	406	.655
Parents	119	34	3.83	3.91	.38	151	.701

Parent Involvement

The parent involvement subscale consisted of three items measuring parent and staff perceptions of three areas of parent involvement in the school: supervision of homework, classroom help, and participation in other school activities. See Figure 6.

Figure 6.
Parent Involvement

34. Parents supervise their children's homework.
35. Parents help in the classroom.
36. Parents help with other school activities (PTA, school projects, etc.)

There were no significant differences in parents' ratings of their involvement or in educators' ratings of parent involvement. See Table 7.

TABLE 7.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Parent Involvement

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	405	485	3.54	3.56	.26	888	.796
Parents	325	237	3.52	3.50	-.28	560	.777
Secondary							
Staff	210	194	2.58	2.48	-1.60	402	.109
Parents	120	34	2.60	2.84	1.34	152	.182

School Rating

A single item rating educational excellence was included in this subscale. Both parents and staff were asked to rate the quality of the education at their school. See Figure 7.

Figure 7.
School Rating

37. Children get an excellent education at this school.

Ratings of educational quality by both parents and staff were quite high in elementary and secondary schools. There was a statistically significant decline in school rating by secondary teachers (t=-3.12, p≤ .002). Although the sample size declined somewhat, it is not known what caused this changed perception. See Table 8.

TABLE 8.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
School Rating

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	406	486	4.50	4.55	1.24	890	.214
Parents	325	238	4.25	4.35	1.38	561	.167
Secondary							
Staff	214	193	4.08	3.86	-3.12	405	.002*
Parents	119	34	3.97	3.91	- .30	151	.766

* Alpha level of p≤ .005 used to determine significance

Staff Relationships

The final subscale of the CDS contained nine items and measured staff perceptions of the quality of staff relationships and their positive intentions regarding the character development of students. See Figure 8.

Figure 8.
Staff Relationships

38. The school staff models the behaviors they expect of students.
39. The faculty and administration work well together.
40. The administration at our school demonstrates moral leadership.
41. The school staff treats each other with respect.
42. Our school is a great place to work.
43. The school staff makes a conscious effort to develop students' character.
44. Our teachers work well together in spite of personal/professional differences.
45. Our school involves parents as full partners in the character-building effort.
46. Our school is truly a caring community.

The overall perception of elementary and secondary staff relationships was quite positive. There was a statistically significant decline in staff relationships at the secondary level ($t=-2.83$, $p \leq .005$). Again, it is not known what factors contributed to this perceived decline.

TABLE 9.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Staff Relationships

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary Staff	405	487	4.43	4.51	1.95	890	.051
Secondary Staff	214	194	3.99	3.81	-2.83	406	.005*

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

Overall

An overall score was calculated for staff, students, and parents at both elementary and secondary schools on the CDS. The overall score included items 1-27 for students, items 1-37 for parents, and items 1-46 for staff. There was a statistically significant improvement in the overall rating given to elementary schools by staff members ($t=2.91$, $p \leq .004$).

TABLE 9.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Overall

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary							
Staff	416	493	4.16	4.24	2.91	907	.004*
Students	352	352	3.95	3.94	- .08	702	.936
Parents	327	259	4.05	4.12	1.73	584	.085
Secondary							
Staff	217	201	3.72	3.63	-2.10	416	.036
Students	170	87	3.40	3.38	- .19	255	.846
Parents	124	47	3.61	3.54	- .60	169	.547

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

Staff Involvement

School staff members were asked to rate their level of involvement in character development efforts at their schools using a 10-point scale with 1 indicating "not involved" and 10 indicating "very involved." There was a statistically significant increase in staff involvement in character education at both the elementary ($t=3.10$, $p \leq .002$) and secondary ($t=3.11$, $p \leq .002$) levels during the 1997-98 school year. See Table 10.

TABLE 10.
Means and T-tests for Elementary and Secondary Schools
Level of Staff Involvement

GROUP	N		MEAN		t	df	p (2-tailed)
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST			
Elementary Staff	340	409	6.34	6.92	3.10	747	.002*
Secondary Staff	179	162	6.13	6.96	3.11	339	.002*

*Alpha level of $p \leq .005$ used to determine significance

IMPLEMENTATION SURVEY

Description of the Instrument

The Implementation Survey consisted of 19 items regarding teacher professional development related to character education and use of a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom. Teachers were asked to indicate "yes" or "no" to each statement. In addition, two questions asked teachers to rate their involvement in their school's character education efforts and to rate how important they felt it was for their school to focus on character development. These two questions utilized a 10-point Likert-type scale. The survey also included one open ended question that asked teachers to describe the most significant change they made in their approach to teaching or the content of what they taught as a result of their involvement in character education.

Sampling

A random sample of 25% of all classroom teachers who participated in the four year grant were asked to respond to the Implementation Survey. Although it would have been ideal to administer this survey as both a pre and post measure, the knowledge base about effective practices for promoting character was not sufficiently developed at the beginning of the grant. Therefore, this survey was administered as a post survey only and must be interpreted accordingly. It provides an important description of the professional development and teaching strategies of grant participants, but the results cannot be attributed solely to the grant, due to the lack of baseline data and the occurrence of many other character education activities in Utah.

Response Rate

Surveys were distributed to 608 teachers at 67 schools in the six school districts that participated in the grant during the four-year period. Completed surveys were received from 221 teachers representing 33 schools in all six school districts, for a response rate of 49% of schools and 36% of the random sample of teachers. Thirty-three percent of the schools in the sample participated in the first two years of the grant, 21% participated in the second and third years of the grant, and 46% participated in the third and fourth years of the grant. Those schools that actually returned Implementation Surveys had very high response rates, meaning that close to the entire 25% sample was returned. Of the elementary schools that participated, 88% of the expected surveys were returned, while at the secondary schools 78% of the expected surveys were returned. The surveys represented a good cross-section of teachers, with each grade level approximately equally represented and at the secondary level a variety of content areas represented.

Professional Development Results

The first six items dealt with professional development of teachers. Of the 221 respondents, 144 were elementary teachers and 65 were secondary teachers. More than 90% of teachers had read articles or attended faculty meetings or inservices about character education. More than half of all teachers had collaborated with colleagues to develop character education activities or curriculum, participated in school committees, and attended professional development activities not sponsored by the grant. A quarter of respondents had even presented inservice to colleagues about character education. The percentages of teachers selecting yes for each item are presented by level in Table 11.

TABLE 11.
Percent of Teachers Engaging in Professional Development Activities

ITEM	K-6	7-12	OVERALL
I have attended a faculty meeting or inservice about character development.	95	89	93
I have read articles about character development.	90	91	90
I have collaborated with colleagues to develop character education activities or curriculum.	77	69	75
I have attended a conference, workshop or class on character development.	65	58	63
I have participated in school committees related to character development.	57	65	60
I have helped present inservice on character education to colleagues.	26	25	26

Use of Teaching Strategies

Teachers at both the elementary and secondary level used a variety of teaching strategies to promote character development in the classroom. More than 90% of all teachers reported that they consciously model good character, use class situations to discuss values, use student rewards or recognition, use strategies to promote cooperative learning and develop leadership skills, and integrate values throughout the curriculum. More than 85% of teachers also have developed their own character-related curriculum, allow student choice in assignments and grouping, and encourage student involvement in determining class rules. Seventy-eight percent of teachers teach conflict resolution skills, 73% provide opportunities for school service, 65% use class meetings, and nearly half provide opportunities for community service. See Table 12.

TABLE 12.
Percent of Teachers Using Various Teaching Strategies

ITEM	K-6	7-12	OVERALL
I consciously model good character in all of my interactions with students.	99	98	99
I use situations that arise in class as a way to discuss values with my students.	100	95	99
I use rewards or recognition to encourage positive student behavior.	99	88	96
I use cooperative learning or other strategies to teach students to work cooperatively.	99	88	95
I have integrated the teaching of values throughout my curriculum.	92	88	90
I provide specific opportunities in my classroom for students to develop leadership skills.	93	82	90
I involve students in procedures such as determining class rules and helping with jobs.	94	75	89
I allow students opportunities to make choices about assignments and whom they work with.	89	78	86
I have developed my own curriculum focusing on values that I use in my classroom.	86	86	86
I teach the skills of conflict resolution or peer mediation to my students.	85	64	78
I provide organized opportunities for my students to participate in school service.	78	63	73
I use class meetings to help students gain experience in goal setting and problem solving.	68	57	65
I provide organized opportunities for my students to participate in community service.	51	37	47

Level of Involvement

Teachers were asked to rate their level of involvement in their school's character education efforts using a 10 point scale with 1 meaning "uninvolved" and 10 meaning "very involved." Both elementary and secondary teachers reported moderately high levels of involvement with an average of 7.30 for elementary teachers and an average of 6.26 for secondary teachers. See Table 13.

TABLE 13.
Frequencies of Elementary and Secondary Teacher Ratings of Involvement

Level	Elementary	Secondary
1	0	2
2	3	1
3	6	5
4	5	3
5	12	14
6	18	6
7	20	16
8	37	9
9	22	4
10	19	5
MEAN	**7.30**	**6.26**

Importance of Character Development

In addition to rating their level of involvement, teachers were asked how important they thought it was for their school to focus on character development. Teachers at both levels thought it was very important for their schools to focus on character education, with an average score of 9.24 for elementary teachers and 8.68 for secondary teachers. Looking at these results together, it is clear that teachers are supportive of character education, but judging from the discrepancy between their ratings of their personal involvement in their schools' character education efforts and how important they think it is, there is room for increased involvement. See Table 14.

TABLE 14.
Frequencies of Elementary and Secondary Teacher Ratings of Importance of a School Focus on Character Development

Level	Elementary	Secondary
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	2
5	5	1
6	3	4
7	5	5
8	18	12
9	21	14
10	92	27
MEAN	**9.24**	**8.68**

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